OCCASIONAL PAPERS

DRAMATIC AND HISTORICAL

H·B·IRVING

Author ..... Irving, H.B.
Class. No. ..... PN 1623
Accession No. 98217

23 0925835 8

MAIN LIBRARY
QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
DATE DUE FOR RETURN

29 MAY 2002

-7 JUL 2004

WITHDRAWN
FROM STOCK
QMUL LIBRARY

98217
19.10.72

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

DRAMATIC AND HISTORICAL

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

DRAMATIC AND HISTORICAL

BY

H. B. IRVING, M.A. Oxon.

AUTHOR OF

"LIFE OF JUDGE JEFFREYS," AND

"STUDIES OF FRENCH CRIMINALS"

LONDON

BICKERS AND SON

1906

[*All rights reserved*]

PREFACE

I HAVE ventured to publish these occasional papers in the hope that the few who did me the honour of hearing or reading them may care to possess them in book form, and that to the many who have neither heard nor read them the subjects of which they treat may be sufficiently interesting in themselves to help to while away a leisure hour.

H. B. IRVING.

The Publishers desire to express their thanks to Sir James Knowles, W. L. Courtney, Esq., and Messrs. Smith Elder & Co. for permission to reprint such of these essays as have appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, *Fortnightly Review*, and *Cornhill Magazine*.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY	1
THE ART AND STATUS OF THE ACTOR	65
COLLEY CIBBER'S "APOLOGY"	91
THE CALLING OF THE ACTOR	123
THE TRUE STORY OF EUGENE ARAM	139
THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF GOODERE	161
THE FUALDÈS CASE	185
THE EARLY LIFE OF CHIEF JUSTICE SCROGGS	227

The English Stage in the Eighteenth Century

THE ENGLISH STAGE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY[1]

I

I HAVE selected as the subject of the two lectures which I am to have the honour of delivering to you the history of our English stage in the eighteenth century. The history of our theatre has been as glorious as it has been brief. For the three centuries of its existence as a part of our national life, our stage can point, with justifiable pride, to a record, splendid in its achievement, in some respects unsurpassed, a history that may well rank in quality and distinction with those of literature and art, and compare worthily with the annals of any of the European theatres. I think, roughly speaking, we may say that of those three centuries—the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth—the first was the century of great drama, the greatest drama the world has ever known ; the second a century in which the interest shifts from the drama to its exponents, the players ; the third a century which at any rate we may venture to say, even though we are yet so close to it, will be noteworthy for the extraordinary advance made in the presentation of plays on the stage, the realisation of the utmost that the theatre can do in the way of giving to the work of the dramatist a worthy setting ; a century in which painting, music, history, and archæology have all been pressed into the service of the theatre, in a degree never thought or

[1] Two lectures delivered at the Royal Institution in February, 1906. Reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review*.

dreamed of by our forefathers. Of these periods of theatrical history, general reasons point to the eighteenth century as the one which will at present best repay study and consideration. For the actual history of the theatre in the seventeenth century, for the lives of the dramatists and actors of those days, our materials are very scanty ; to one seeking to gain a real knowledge of the great men of the Elizabethan and Restoration theatres, investigation can only yield very inadequate and therefore disappointing results. The nineteenth is too near to us to make it in the present instance either profitable or expedient to deal with its achievement. But the eighteenth century is not open to these objections ; in this case the materials are sufficient ; our stage becomes for the first time in some measure living, we can form some idea of the personalities of those who make its history, and we are so far removed in point of time as to be able to view their proceedings with impartiality. And there is one supreme reason why an actor is drawn irresistibly to study, if he does study, the history of the theatre in this eighteenth century. It is, in theatrical history, the century of the actor ; he and not the dramatist is the dominating figure, his the achievement that survives, his art that finds in this century its highest opportunity for distinction. It is the player, not the author, that fixes the attention of posterity in the history of the Georgian theatre. For all those plays that attracted audiences in the eighteenth century are for the most part dead things. We can name on the fingers of one hand those plays that have survived and still hold their place on the stage. Home and Rowe, Murphy and Colman, Hill and D'Urfey, more or less popular authors of the day, they and their works have passed into oblivion ; to read them with patience is beyond human power ; while as for Addison and Steele, Fielding and Dr. Johnson, Cibber and Smollett, their dramatic efforts, successful or unsuccessful, would be buried in as dark oblivion, but for the undying

fame of their authors in other branches of literature. Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh live to-day as literature and nothing else, while such once-popular plays as Home's *Douglas*, *The Gamester*, *The Honeymoon*, Holcroft's *Road to Ruin*, and Lillo's *George Barnwell*, that survived at any rate their own immediate popularity, have to-day all but passed out of recollection; indeed, Goldsmith and Sheridan alone, of all these eighteenth-century dramatists, have given to posterity imperishable works of genius. The tragic writing of the eighteenth century is devoid of inspiration; it is the true product of that Augustan age of English literature, the age of noble prose, or regular, uniform, correct, but unimpassioned poetry. Tragedy, bound hand and foot by the trammels of poetical orthodoxy, is lifeless and ponderous to the last degree; Dr. Johnson's *Irene* is the *reductio ad absurdum* of such attempts. The comedies are not so insufferable as the tragedies, but they are for the most part purely ephemeral productions, mechanical in construction, laboured in utterance. Cibber and Colman do little more than mark time between the brilliant impropriety of the age of Wycherley and Congreve and their more decorous and skilful successors, Goldsmith and Sheridan.

If, however, posterity can find nothing to kindle its interest in the contemporary plays of the eighteenth century, it is not so with the players. For the first time in our history we begin to know something of our actors, and very interesting and entertaining people they turn out to be; interesting because of the conditions under which they work, entertaining because of their agreeable or disagreeable personalities. Never as an artist has the actor in this country enjoyed such opportunities for distinction, or occupied so prominent a place in the art of the theatre. Many causes contributed to this state of things. Foremost of all, perhaps, was the absence of long runs—the bane, from the actor's point of view, of our modern stage; the constant change of bill enabled the successful

actor in the eighteenth century to cultivate and exhibit his versatility; whilst the fact that he never played a long or exacting part more than three or four times a week enabled him to husband his strength, maintain his freshness, and escape that monotony of work which it is difficult for an actor not to experience in the conditions of our present-day theatre, when business considerations compel the theatrical manager to give seven or eight performances a week of a successful play. Mrs. Woffington, one of the most industrious of eighteenth-century actresses, was considered to have greatly impaired her health and hastened her premature death by frequently playing six times a week. What would her contemporaries have said to the labour of some of our modern actors, who, up to the very end of their career, have played arduous and exacting characters uninterruptedly season after season? Garrick, throughout his career, never played more than 138 nights in one year, and that the year of his *début*; during his management of Drury Lane he played on an average about 70 times a year. The run of Addison's *Cato* in 1713, which lasted twenty nights, of the *Beggar's Opera* in 1728, lasting sixty-two, were considered phenomenal in their length; and when in 1750 Garrick and Barry, as rival Romeos, played Shakepeare's tragedy at the two theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, for eight successive performances, the indignation of the public found vent in epigram. This very rivalry of Garrick and Barry in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the excitement it created, is a very striking instance of the keen emulation of the actors of that day in following one another in classical parts, and of the critical enthusiasm that was stirred in the public, whenever a new Othello, or Hamlet, or Falstaff challenged comparison with illustrious predecessors. And the opportunity given to these eighteenth-century actors of exhibiting their skill was rendered glorious by the proudest feature in the history of the Georgian theatre—the return of Shakespeare to the

stage. If the contemporary drama offered them but poor material for the exercise of their art, they found in the revival of the great poet's fame all they could desire. Coincidently with the appearance of David Garrick in 1741, by the labours of Pope, Theobald, Warburton, Johnson, and others, Shakespeare had begun to take his supreme place in English literature; within the previous forty years nine editions of his works had been published, and some ladies of rank had formed a club to encourage and support the performance of his plays. This change found its immediate reflection in the theatre. Whereas during the early part of the century but eight or nine sorely mutilated plays of Shakespeare had held the stage, Garrick, when he went into the management, gave the public seventeen or eighteen of them annually. Apart from his own admiration of Shakespeare, which did not hinder him from perpetrating some outrageous improvements in his acting versions of the master's plays, Garrick found that he best consulted his own interests as a manager in giving his patrons frequent Shakespearean performances.

There was another and a very strong reason why the actor of the eighteenth century was encouraged, nay, driven, to exert his powers to the utmost; it lay in the conditions under which he was compelled to exercise his art. In the first place, he was deprived of most of those accessories of scenery and costume which to-day have become part of our theatre. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that any real attempt was made by the actor to dress his characters in the costumes proper to the period of the play in which they figured. When in 1773 Macklin, to the incidental accompaniment of the Coldstream March, appeared as Macbeth, dressed in a kilt, he incurred all the ridicule and opprobrium of a daring innovator. The ordinary costume and wig of the day, richer or poorer in style according to the station of the character represented, was the only theatrical dress of the eighteenth-century

actors. If we look at the pictures in the Garrick Club of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in *Macbeth*, of Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in *Venice Preserved*, or Barry and Mrs. Barry in *Hamlet*, we can get some idea of the illusion that the actor was called on to create, and could only create, by the magic of his art. Barry, as Hamlet, is dressed in a black court suit, with the ribbon of the Danish Order of the "Elephant" across his breast. Garrick as Macbeth wears a blue and red suit, richly trimmed with gold, and short powdered wig; while the ladies, whether as Queen Gertrude or Lady Macbeth, are gorgeous in hoops and feathers. Occasionally some attempt would be made to dress Turkish or classical tragedies with some approach to realism; but such attempts were usually rather less convincing than powdered wigs and court suits.

It was not only on the stage that the actor of this day had to contend against formidable difficulties. He had all his work cut out to fix and hold the attention of his audience. Until 1762 he played on a stage surrounded by fops and fine gentlemen, "unlick'd cubs of condition," as Cibber terms them. These persons, lolling in the wings, frequently interrupted the actors, and occasionally fought with them. In 1721 a noble but drunken earl, standing in the wings during a performance of *Macbeth*, crossed the stage to talk to a friend. Rich, the manager, expostulated with the nobleman for his breach of decorum, and he promptly slapped the manager's face. Thereupon Quin and two of the other actors drew their swords and drove the earl and his friends from the stage. But the gentlemen, not to be defeated, rushed into the boxes and, cutting and slashing right and left, proceeded to destroy the furniture; they were only stopped from doing further damage by the resolute action of Quin, who, calling the watch to his assistance, arrested the rioters and haled them before the magistrates. A less disastrous instance of these curious interruptions was that of a gentleman who was so

stirred by the beauty of Mrs. Woffington's performance of Cordelia in *King Lear* that he could not refrain from coming on to the stage and embracing her in the sight of the audience. Cibber, during his management, did something to mitigate the intrusion of these lollers in the wings; but it was left to Garrick to abolish them.

In these days the pit was looked on as containing the critical part of the audience. It occupied the whole of the floor of the theatre, right up to the orchestra. With the exception of the boxes where the ladies and people of quality sat, which cost four shillings, the pit seats at half a crown were the most expensive in the theatre. Macklin, in his old age, has left us a description of these pittites which gives some notion of the awe in which they were held by the actors. "You then saw," he said, speaking of his own day, "no red cloaks, and heard no pattens in the pit, but you saw merchants from the city with big-wigs, lawyers from the Temple with big-wigs, and physicians from the coffee-houses with big-wigs, and the whole exhibited such a formidable grizzle as might well shake the nerves of actors and authors." Here, in the pit, Dr. Johnson would, on occasion, sit in judgment; it was leaning forward in the front row of the pit that the players would descry, with apprehension, the burly form of the poet Churchill, whose satire in *The Rosciad* had stung not a few of them to the quick.

And these gentlemen of the pit gave their criticisms very freely, and often conveyed them very audibly to the persons on the stage. When four theatres at most served the needs of the town and the number of playgoers was very limited, there grew up quite a happy, if at times inconvenient, family feeling between actor and audience. In the prologue that was always spoken before any new play, or on any unique occasion, the actor speaking it would frequently take the audience into his confidence, ask their indulgence for his wife, who was that night making

her first appearance in a new part, or apologise for the absence of some artist who had quarrelled with the management. It was this same intimacy of the player with his public that betrayed Garrick into the bad taste of selecting Benedick as the part in which to make his first appearance at Drury Lane after his honeymoon. But it is only fair to say that the audience thoroughly enjoyed the suggestiveness of the situation.

If an actor, however popular, was considered by the critics of the pit to be ill-suited to some particular part for which he had been cast, or had cast himself, they very soon hissed him out of it. Cibber, a fine comedian, who, however, fancied himself in tragedy, to which his piping voice and insignificant appearance were quite unsuited, elected on one occasion to appear in the dignified character of Scipio in Thomson's *Sophonisba*. After being roundly hissed for two nights, he wisely desisted, and surrendered the part to another actor, Williams. When, the following night, the audience saw in the distance Scipio advancing to the front of the stage with stately strides, thinking it was still Cibber they immediately broke into violent hisses and cat-calls, and it was only when they recognised Williams that they changed their hisses to loud applause.

If players fell out—and they did sometimes—their quarrels became at once the talk of the town, and the pit was quick to take sides. In 1743 the actors at Drury Lane, headed by Garrick and Macklin, revolted against the reckless and discreditable administration of the manager, Fleetwood, whose dissipation and incompetence were bringing the theatre to ruin. Failing, however, to obtain from the Lord Chamberlain—then the Duke of Grafton—a licence to appear elsewhere, the players were obliged to return to Fleetwood, who agreed to receive them all back, with the exception of Macklin. Garrick, on behalf of his colleagues, accepted the manager's terms, and Macklin was left out in the cold. The friends of the

latter chose to consider that he had been betrayed by Garrick, though an examination into the circumstances of the negotiations hardly bears out such a charge. In any case, on Garrick's first re-appearance at Drury Lane, the Macklinites, headed by a certain Dr. Barrowby, "a monster of lewdness and prophaneness," according to some authorities, but a keen playgoer and critic, assembled in great force to express their indignation at their hero's treatment. On Garrick's appearance they greeted him with loud cries of "Off! Off!" and pelted him so vigorously with peas, rotten eggs, and apples that he was compelled to leave the stage. This treatment continued for two nights, until Fleetwood put a party of prize-fighters into the pit, who so pounded and pummelled the uproarious Macklinites that they fled in confusion, and order was restored.

Even the private characters or personal peculiarities of the actors and actresses were not sacred to the witlings of the pit. If an actress of notoriously immodest reputation uttered modest sentiments on the stage she was liable to be greeted with sarcastic jeers; if another with a plain face undertook a character whose personal beauty was emphasised throughout the play, she would be fortunate to escape without flouts from the gentlemen of the pit. At the same time, these critics were prodigal of applause when moved or delighted by a great actor. Aaron Hill, in endeavouring to persuade Garrick to appear as Cæsar in his adaptation of Voltaire's *Death of Cæsar*, told him that Booth, in the rather similar character of Cato in Addison's tragedy, raised forty-eight to fifty thundering claps for delivering various noble sentiments to the audience; and that when Quin played the same part the claps dwindled to half a dozen. Davies says that Hill's statements are excessive, and they make one a little doubtful of a style of acting the excellence of which was measured by interruptions of this kind. At the same time they prove the eagerness and attention with which the delivery of the

lines of some well-known or classical part by succeeding actors was followed by the critical portion of the audience.

On the night of November 14th, 1746, the excitement of all good playgoers was stirred in an unwonted degree, and criticism prepared itself for a great effort in judgment and discrimination. The occasion was the appearance of Garrick and Quin at Drury Lane in Rowe's tragedy, *The Fair Penitent*. It was the first time that the two famous actors had played together in the same piece. Garrick was then in the early years of his extraordinary success. He had come as something of a revelation to those accustomed to the solemn methods of ponderous and declamatory tragedians. Quin was the great representative of this older school. "If this young fellow is right, we have all been wrong," he had said of Garrick's Richard III.; he, the portentous Cato and Brutus, stood in surly opposition to the lively Hamlet and Richard of the younger man, that were drawing all the town.

> Quin, from afar, lured by the scent of fame,
> A stage Leviathan, put in his claim,"

writes Churchill in *The Rosciad*, in enumerating the rivals of Garrick. He pays Quin the compliment of saying:

> No actor ever greater heights could reach
> In all the labour'd artifice of speech.

But he qualifies his praise:

> His eyes in gloomy socket taught to roll,
> Proclaim'd the sullen habit of his soul,
> Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
> Too proud for tenderness, too dull for rage.

And as Hector making love to Andromache, or Horatio rebuking the gay Lothario, Churchill declares that Quin was still Quin and nothing else.

> With the same cast of features he is seen
> To chide the libertine and court the queen.

And now as Horatio and Lothario in *The Fair Penitent* Quin and Garrick were to try conclusions. Such an occasion as this gives us some conception of the position which the actor held as an artist in the theatre of the eighteenth century; the noble emulation that fired his efforts; the closeness, the keenness of the criticism that, undistracted by extraneous and adventitious aids, was focussed on every detail of the player's performance. Acting to-day has, to all intents and purposes, ceased to be closely criticised, nor will it be closely criticised again until the conditions of the eighteenth-century theatre can be in some form or other reproduced. When, on this particular occasion, Garrick and Quin met for the first time on the stage, the applause of the audience was so prolonged that the two rivals were unnerved. Quin is said to have changed colour; Garrick was ill at ease and embarrassed. Quin, as Horatio, played the part of an honest and courageous friend; Garrick, as Lothario, that of a dissolute and heartless libertine. Victory rested with Garrick. To him it was no effort to be easy, graceful, and insolent; but Quin laboured heavily and ineffectually through the part of Horatio; every word was gravely and ponderously emphasised. When Lothario challenges him to meet him in deadly combat,

> West of the town, a mile among the rocks,
> Two hours ere noon, to-morrow I expect thee,
> Thy single hand in mine,

Quin, as Horatio, had merely to reply with calm courage:

> I'll meet thee there.

But that was not Quin's way. After Garrick had spoken his challenge, a tremendous pause ensued—so long that at last one in the gallery called out to Quin: "Why don't you tell the gentleman whether you'll meet him or not?" When at length the long-delayed answer was given, it was

delivered with such slowness and elaboration as to be ridiculous. Garrick came off victorious in *The Fair Penitent*. And he was equally victorious in *Jane Shore*; his Hastings was declared to be a fine performance, whilst Quin, as the Duke of Gloucester, made such impression as might be expected in a character which he himself always spoke of as one of his "whisker" parts. But in the first part of *Henry IV.* success lay undoubtedly with Quin. It was in the character of Falstaff, and not in tragedy, that Quin had established his position as a first-rate actor, whilst Garrick found himself physically unable to cope with the rough, soldierly passion of Hotspur; his fine and flexible voice, unable to sustain the loud vehemence of the character, gave out after five nights, and he had to retire from the cast. Critics considered also that he had not dressed the part with propriety; a laced frock and a Ramillies wig were held to be too insignificant for the dignity of the character.

That the audiences of the eighteenth century should have been freer in their criticisms and in their method of expressing them than our modern audiences is in no way surprising if we recollect that there was in the eighteenth century no written dramatic criticism in the sense that we understand it now. The newspapers of the day did not follow or criticise theatrical performances with any regularity; this form of criticism was not instituted until early in the nineteenth century, when Leigh Hunt became the dramatic critic of a paper called *The News*. Occasional pamphlets would deal with actors' performances, but as they were generally written to attack one actor at the expense of another, or were the spiteful retort of some disappointed dramatist, they could be of little value as criticisms. Indeed, a successful actor like Garrick had far more to dread from blackmailing libels on his private character than from strictures on his acting. It was an age when scurrilous personalities were the accustomed weapons of

literary and artistic quarrels; and Cibber and Garrick came in for their full share of such things. But of reviews and sane criticism there was little enough. What we learn of the art of the actors of the eighteenth century we learn from books such as Cibber's *Apology*, Churchill's *Rosciad*, Davies's *Life of Garrick*, and his *Dramatic Miscellanies*, and the various letters and memoirs of the time. Occasionally an enthusiastic playgoer would publish an elaborate treatise on the art of the "Actor," as that in which the author propounds and answers such interesting questions as whether an actor can have too much fire; whether, if he be a comedian, he must possess what the author terms the "interior qualification" of a gay and happy disposition; or whether he who plays the hero of tragedy should have the "interior qualification" of an elevated soul; whether players who are naturally amorous are the only ones who should impersonate lovers on the stage; and the most important and delicate question, whether there should be a real or apparent conformity between the age of the actor and that of the character he is representing. This exhaustive treatise, entitled *The Actor*, was published anonymously, but it has been attributed to Aaron Hill, one of the most ardent devotees of theatrical art in the eighteenth century, a warm-hearted and benevolent gentleman, who lost a fortune in various schemes that were to benefit his fellowmen. The theatre was his ruling passion. His love of classical tragedy led him not only to christen his children Julius Cæsar, Calliope, Urania, and Minerva, but to translate Voltaire's *Merope* and *Mort de César;* his keen interest in acting prompted him to bestow advice and instruction so liberally on the players that they came to regard him as something of a nuisance. If he be the author of *The Actor* their impatience is not to be wondered at, for he is mighty severe in his strictures on some of the players and tiresome in his praises of others. He does not hesitate to attribute the shortcomings of Mrs. Bellamy on the stage to the hurry

of her passions and the multitude of her lovers at home; whilst the improvement he has discerned in Mrs. Woffington's acting is, in his opinion, to be set down to the fact that, for the last two years, her domestic arrangements have been in a more tranquil state. She, too, is sharply rebuked for taking too much pains about her face and too little about her mind; the author prophesies that, if she is not more careful, when "her face (as in time it will be) is not worth a farthing, her mind will not be worth a fiftieth part of one."

Some of his reflections are pertinent enough, as when he speaks of the many who thoughtlessly adopt the calling of the actor, when they can have no more hope of succeeding in it "than a fat fellow wheezing with asthma could hope to win the prize in a foot-race," or of that "set of wretches, the perfunctory players, who deliver their parts as if they were easing themselves of a burden which they were hired for carrying, and in pain till they were rid of." "Let a man not think," he writes, "that all an actor needs is to have a memory and the power of speaking, walking, and tossing his arms about." His concluding sentiments are applicable to other centuries as well as his own. He protests against the tendency of the critics of his own day to discourage young players who attempt great characters; aspiring genius which has "some merit and the necessary requisites from nature" should, he thinks, be stimulated, not depressed; he deprecates the common folly of admiring the actors of the past much more than they were admired when they were alive, in order to dash the spirits of their successors, five or six of whom he declares to be equal to any of those old actors so greatly commended.

This treatise is instructive, because it illustrates the close attention with which the work of actors was scrutinised by a critical playgoer. But it will not bear comparison with the two classics of theatrical literature in the eighteenth century, Colley Cibber's *Apology for His Life* and

Churchill's poem of *The Rosciad*. These two works, though comparatively little known to modern readers, are both of them remarkable, the former as a lively autobiography that delighted such opposite critics as Swift and Horace Walpole, the latter as one of the happiest productions of that genius for satire which is the distinguishing characteristic of the poetic literature of the century.

Colley Cibber, actor, manager, poet, and dramatist, holds an unique position among the players of his time. His versatility is in itself remarkable. As an actor, if he failed in tragedy, in comedy he was the creator of characters now forgotten, but in his own time celebrated and admired; he was the original Lord Foppington and Sir Novelty Fashion. These two characters belonged to plays of his own making, for Cibber was also a prolific dramatist. He turned out a number of comedies, very popular and successful in their day, some tragedies that were less popular, a few masques and interludes, and adapted for the stage two of Shakespeare's plays, one an outrageous mutilation of *King John* with the cumbrous title of *Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John*, the other a version of *Richard III.* which, until about thirty years ago, held the stage in preference to the original. As a poet, Cibber attained to the office of Laureate, and that is all that need be said. It is as a theatrical manager that, with all his faults, he extorts our admiration and respect. His management of Drury Lane Theatre, extending over more than twenty years, from 1711 to 1733, is a memorable epoch in theatrical history. At the opening of the eighteenth century the state of the theatre was anything but palmy. The stage was still staggering under Jeremy Collier's vehement and well-merited denunciation of its impropriety; the older generation of actors, with the exception of Betterton, had passed away, and had as yet left no successors. The actors were divided into two companies: one was at Lincoln's Inn Fields, under

Betterton, where, says Cibber, "the players were most of them too advanced in years to mend"—Betterton himself was seventy—the other was at Drury Lane, under Rich; and here the actors, Cibber himself among them, he described as "too young to be excellent." But the younger company was the more successful of the two, and all would have gone well with them but for the impossible character of their manager, Christopher Rich. Originally a lawyer, he was one of those persons who enter into theatrical business with the sole purpose of getting as much money as they can out of it, regardless of the claims of art or the feelings of their artists. To this excusable insensibility Rich added positive dishonesty. His ambition as a manager was to cheat his actors out of as much of their legitimate gains as he could; and as a lawyer he was able to do this with some skill. At length, however, his misconduct led to a revolt, and after considerable negotiation, Drury Lane came for the first time under the management of three actors—Cibber, Wilks, and Doggett. Now, for the first time for many years, the theatre was properly and honestly administered. The credit of this is due chiefly to Cibber himself. Wilks, an accomplished actor, cared for nothing so long as he had good parts and plenty of them; Doggett retired from the partnership early in its history, and was succeeded by Barton Booth, the tragedian and original representative of Addison's Cato, an amiable, indulgent, and easy-going gentleman. Cibber was quite equal to the task imposed on him. His natural gaiety of disposition, his impudent self-confidence, his shrewdness, his sensible appreciation of facts, which his ingenuous vanity never impaired, well fitted him for the task of smoothing down difficult colleagues, facing reverses, overcoming hostility, and making money. With justifiable pride he declared that, during his management, bills were paid regularly, that no actor ever required a written agreement, and that the work of the theatre was carried on with order

and propriety. The much-tried actor-manager comes in for a great deal of unsympathetic criticism; by some he is even represented as the great bane of theatrical art in this country. But history shows us conclusively that, so far, it is to the actor-manager we owe all the most worthy achievement of our theatre, the preservation from decay and disorder of all that is highest in theatrical art. To Cibber, Garrick, and John Kemble, as actor-managers, is due the credit of rescuing the theatres of the eighteenth century from the dishonesty or incompetence or extravagance of such worthless managers as Rich, or Fleetwood, or Sheridan. Cibber says truly of his own record—and it applies to those of his immediate successors—"our being actors ourselves was an advantage to our government, which all former managers who were only idle gentlemen wanted." In the absence of a State theatre, it has fallen to the task of individual actors to do what they can to uphold the finer traditions of our stage; and history proves to us that, in face of difficulties that time has increased rather than diminished, these actors have not failed in their duty. Whether it has brought them profit or loss, prosperity or ruin, they have successively devoted themselves to an enterprise which, in almost every other country but our own, has been deemed not unworthy of the assistance of the State. If, as some tell us, we are to see in the future a great extension of State control in our domestic concerns, it will be interesting to see if that extension spreads as far as the theatre.

Cibber sums up very fairly the history of his own management. "Though," he says, "our best merit as actors was never equal to that of our predecessors, yet I will venture to say that in all its branches the stage had never been under so just, so prosperous, and so settled a regulation for forty years before." It is true that in Cibber's time no actor of genius appeared who could challenge, to those who remembered him, the supreme

excellence of Betterton. Though the best part of his career belongs to the seventeenth century, Betterton was still playing Hamlet in 1709 at the advanced age of seventy-four, and playing it with a successful assumption of youth that extorted the admiration of Steele. Cibber does his best to give posterity some notion of the extraordinary powers of this great actor, and, as far as such a thing is possible, he is not altogether unsuccessful. Though Betterton's voice was manly rather than sweet, his figure short and inclining to corpulence, his limbs athletic rather than delicate, yet with these disadvantages he had that personality, that something indefinable in bearing and countenance, which, from the moment of his appearance on the stage, seemed to seize and rivet the attention of the audience, the eyes and ears of even the giddy and the inadvertent. Betterton must have had just that quality of personal magnetism—there seems no better word by which to describe this peculiar attribute—which is as essential to the great actor as it is to the great orator, the great statesman, the great soldier, which is, indeed, a part of what men call greatness. As an actual instance of the method of Betterton's art, Cibber describes for us his treatment of the scene in *Hamlet*, in which the Prince first sees his father's spirit. It was the custom, he says, of most actors, on seeing the ghost, to throw themselves into a strained and violent tone of voice expressive of rage and fury, and bring down thunders of applause by the force of their declamation. Betterton was the first to give to the scene its real significance ; it was with mute amazement he first looked on his dear father's spirit, and then in a solemn, trembling voice, which made the ghost as terrible to the spectator as to himself, with awe and reverence, from which all thought of violence or defiance was banished, he addressed the spirit. One writer avers that in this scene Betterton's countenance, which was naturally ruddy and sanguine, turned as white as his neckcloth in the stress of

his emotion. If this be true, he was not only a great, but peculiarly gifted, actor. But the whole description is perhaps a little highly coloured, for the same author says that at the sight of Betterton's horror and distress the blood of the audience seemed to shudder in their veins. More convincing than such criticism as this, is the testimony of Barton Booth, the tragedian, who succeeded Betterton in "many of his characters." "When I acted the ghost with Betterton," said Booth, "instead of my aweing him, he terrified me. But divinity hung round that man!" Truly there must have been about Betterton a grandeur, a nobility of soul, that on the stage and in private life alike compelled the love and veneration of the men who knew him. It was this love and respect that took Steele to Westminster Abbey to see the last office done to one whom, he wrote in *The Tatler*, "I have always very much admired, and from whose action I had received more strong expressions of what is great and noble in human nature than from the arguments of the most solid philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets I have ever read." A greater, a finer tribute was never paid to an actor. If the eighteenth century produced in Garrick Betterton's equal as a player, perhaps his superior in some respects, Garrick never held in men's hearts the place that Betterton held in the love and esteem of his contemporaries.

History repeats itself in the theatre as elsewhere. The treatment of this very scene with his father's ghost which made Betterton's Hamlet something of a revelation in his day, is the same that impressed a German critic who witnessed the Hamlet of David Garrick, and made Fielding put into the mouth of Partridge in *Tom Jones* the famous criticism of Garrick's deportment in this scene. The secret of all these striking and immediate successes by which in the past actors have suddenly leapt into fame has at all times been a return to nature in the presentment of some

character, a revolt against the staginess and unreality of a hide-bound convention, a treatment of a character or a scene that, instead of calling down the customary applause which an experienced actor can always provoke by tricks of declamation, quite regardless of good sense, produces rather that mute astonishment in an audience which is more eloquent to the artist than the clapping of hands. And just as Garrick in *Richard III.* and *Hamlet*, by a return to nature brought back on to the stage the true spirit and genius of acting which had died for a time with Betterton, so did Edmund Kean repeat, more than seventy years after, the striking success which, in 1741, Charles Macklin had made in the character of Shylock by playing the Jew for the first time as a real and serious human being. Kean was a genius and Macklin was not; Kean leapt into a fame which did not depend only on his conception of Shylock; Macklin made no deep impression in any other Shakespearean character. But both these actors were courageous enough to depart from tradition in their reading of this particular part, to face at rehearsal nothing but discouragement, ridicule, or contempt from their fellow-actors, and were sufficiently gifted, sufficiently masters of their art, to convince audiences accustomed to laugh at the grotesque and comic Jew of stage convention that Shylock, whatever the unreality, the fancifulness of the fable of the play, was a living, breathing embodiment of a type conceived and executed by the dramatist in all seriousness and earnestness.

II

Robert Wilks, Barton Booth, and Mrs. Oldfield are the principal figures in stage history during Cibber's time, and, if not three of the greatest, they are three of the most amiable and distinguished persons who have ever adopted the calling of a player. Many are apt to think that the

actors of the past were people of obscure and vulgar origin, mere strollers, who sacrificed little in following an ignoble and despised occupation. Such a view is incorrect. The majority of those players who attained to fame were of gentle birth, many of them the equals in manners and culture of the distinguished persons with whom the successful actor or actress of the day was invited to associate. Of the three just alluded to, Wilks was grandson of a judge, and gave up a lucrative post in the War Office at Dublin to become an actor; Booth was the son of a country gentleman, related to the Earls of Warrington; and Mrs. Oldfield the daughter of a captain in the Army. Cibber, Quin, Garrick, Foote, Macklin, Henderson, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Clive all came of what we may call respectable antecedents.

Robert Wilks excelled as an actor by the refinement, the grace, the charm of his personality. He could not rise to great heights, but in such a character as Prince Hal in *Henry IV.* he was the embodiment of elegance, gallantry, and high spirit. Wilks had feeling as well as charm; "to beseech gracefully, to approach respectfully, to pity, to mourn, to love," said Steele, "are the places wherein Wilks may be said to shine with the utmost beauty." Though his love of his calling made him in the theatre too greedy of work, too impatient of rivals, and so a constant source of trouble to his colleague Cibber, Wilks was in private life a generous, warm-hearted gentleman of high character, whose kindness to Farquhar and Savage testifies to the unfeigned goodness and liberality of his disposition.

His colleague in management, and in some parts his rival, Barton Booth, was the great tragedian of his day. A man of scholarly tastes, educated at Westminster and Cambridge, he fled from these highly respectable surroundings to join a company of strolling players. His fine voice and dignified bearing soon brought him to the front. He had no sense of humour; comedy he was unable to

appreciate ; but in such parts as the Ghost in *Hamlet*, Othello, Cato, in which a sense of humour is hardly a necessity, he was unrivalled in his day. It was Addison's *Cato* which made Booth's reputation and fortune. No one reads *Cato* now, but when it was produced, in 1713, its success was phenomenal ; it ran for the then astonishingly long period of thirty-five nights ; and Booth's performance so pleased Lord Bolingbroke that he used his influence to get him made one of the managers of Drury Lane. The refined solemnity of Booth must have found full scope for its employment in the title-rôle of Addison's tragedy ; one can see him sitting in the last act, according to the stage directions, "in a thoughtful posture, in his hand Plato's book on the *Immortality of the Soul*," a drawn sword on the table beside him ; one can hear Cato's groans off stage :

> But hark ! what means that groan ?

says his son :

> Oh ! give me way !

He rushes off to his father's aid. One of those left on the stage exclaims :

> Ha ! a second groan. Heaven guard us all !

Cato is brought on dying from a self-inflicted wound. At the end of a long speech he at length gives up the ghost with the words :

> Oh ! ye powers that search
> The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
> If I have done amiss, impute it not !
> The best may err ; but you are good—and—oh !

This final "and—oh !" of Cato is worthy to rank with the more famous "Oh, Sophonisba, Sophonisba, oh !" of Thomson's tragedy, as typical of the stilted, mechanical,

uninspired muse of these eighteenth-century writers of tragedy. It must have indeed demanded a genius such as Garrick to give life and animation to the soulless characters that fill the prolix tragedies of Rowe and Henry Jones and the Rev. Mr. Miller. But men were quite satisfied in his day with such plays, and with the grave and rounded utterance with which Booth spoke their inanimate lines; though at times, we are told, the popular tragedian would have a lethargic fit on him, and then would not choose to exert himself in the part he was playing. With that freedom of criticism which distinguishes the audiences of the eighteenth century, when Booth, on one occasion, was acting with unusual apathy, a gentleman in a stage-box sent him a polite note asking him whether he was acting for his own diversion or that of the public. At other times the sight of a friend of Addison's sitting in the pit, or an Oxford man whose judgment he respected, would be sufficient to rouse Booth to exert his full powers. Booth, like Wilks, was a man of an open and generous disposition, loved and respected by many friends.

Indeed, there would seem to have been no more popular people in their day than these three prime favourites of the stage—Wilks, Booth, and Mrs. Oldfield. Mrs. Oldfield was perhaps the most remarkable of the three. What Fielding termed her "ravishing perfection," her beauty, the fire and spirit of her acting, the charm and refinement of her personality, made her, both on and off the stage, the idol of friends and public. "Women of the first ranks," writes Horace Walpole, "might have borrowed some part of her behaviour without the least diminution of their sense of dignity." As an artist she took high rank both in comedy and tragedy, though her inclination lay towards the former; she hated, she said, as a tragedy queen, to have a page dragging her train about, and would rather such parts were given to her rival, Mrs. Porter. Her countenance, benevolent like her heart, was capable of

expressing the most varied passions. When an impudent beau, for some private grudge, rose and hissed her from the pit, she turned to him, paused, and uttered the words, "Poor creature!" with such withering contempt that the unmannerly interrupter was glad to sit down again. "Even her amours," says one writer, "seemed to lose that glare which appears round the persons of the failing fair; neither was it ever known that she troubled the repose of any lady's lawful claim; and was far more constant than millions in the conjugal noose." Generous to her friends, faithful to her lovers, consummate in her art, Mrs. Oldfield attended royal levées, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Her death in 1730, the death of Wilks two years later, the retirement of Booth, and finally that of Cibber in 1732, closed a period in stage history which, if not glorious, marked an improvement in the general administration and conduct of the theatre that reflects credit on the three managers of Drury Lane. If they did not train up any younger players of conspicuous talent to take the place of Wilks and Booth, Cibber defends them by reminding his critics that making actors is not as easy as planting cabbages. Obscure, unsuccessful, disappointed authors uttered bitter complaints against the arrogance of Cibber towards struggling playwrights, and the vanity of Wilks in rejecting plays that afforded him no opportunity for personal distinction. There may have been some justice in such complaints, but I think we may safely assume that the judgment of Cibber and his colleagues, which was respected by Congreve, Steele, and Farquhar, did not oppress or neglect much real talent. The cry of the disappointed dramatist goes up unceasingly through the eighteenth century. It was generally uttered in pamphlet form, and made up of diatribes against the stage, its actors and its managers.

Cibber pleads guilty to one reproach, that of encouraging

such new-fangled foppery to draw the multitude, such "monstrous medleys" as the popular pantomimes, pieces like *The Harlequin Sorcerer*, in which music, dancing, and novel scenic effects were employed to attract the more giddy spectators. As an actor Cibber had been so scandalised by Christopher Rich's attempt to bring elephants and rope-dancers on to the stage of Drury Lane Theatre, that he had gone down into the pit and asked his patrons to excuse him from appearing any longer on a stage degraded by such unseemly exhibitions. But as a manager, Cibber found himself compelled to fall back on these very meretricious shows, which, as an actor, he had so gravely resented; he frankly acknowledges his apostasy and pleads managerial necessity as his excuse. Here, he says, was one of the deplorable consequences of the re-division of the actors and actresses of London into two companies. When Cibber first went on the stage, there had been only the one company of players at Drury Lane, a condition that lasted for eleven years, until 1695. In that year Betterton seceded from Drury Lane, and obtained from William III. a licence to open a new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Then, according to Cibber, began the deterioration in theatrical entertainment. The least successful of the two theatres was bound, sooner or later, to resort to illegitimate means in order to make head against its rival. Thus it was that pantomime, and, what Cibber regards with almost equal indignation, Italian opera, found its way on to the English stage. But the cause of these dangerous innovations is surely more general than Cibber is willing to admit. There must always be a majority of the public who prefer what is light and thoughtless in theatrical entertainment to what is grave and thoughtful, and as life becomes more strenuous and exacting, their number is not likely to diminish. The serious drama will always have a harder fight for existence than the gay and frivolous, and will yield less profit to those who devote themselves to its

cause. It fared better in the eighteenth century than it does now; but we can see that in Cibber's day the time had come when it was not to have things all its own way, as in the days of Shakespeare and Pepys. The more generally popular the theatre became, the sooner it was obliged to cater for all forms of popular taste, and popular taste responded joyfully when it opened its doors to elephants, rope-dancers, and Italian warblers.

> The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give,

and Cibber, and Garrick after him, found themselves, as managers, obliged to sandwich the legitimate drama between opera and pantomime. They did so with reluctance; but managers such as Christopher Rich and his son John, men utterly unsympathetic towards actors, threw themselves with ardour into the development of spectacular entertainments. In 1732 John Rich moved his company of players from the old theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields to the new playhouse in Covent Garden, and from this date Covent Garden and Drury Lane became the two principal London theatres. It was at Covent Garden that John Rich, under the name of "Mr. Lun," made himself famous as the first and greatest of English harlequins. Says Churchill,

> See from afar,
> The hero seated in fantastic car,
> Wedded to novelty, his only arms
> Are wooden swords, wands, talismans, and charms;
> On one side Folly sits, by some called Fun,
> And on the other his arch-patron Lun.
> Behind, for liberty athirst in vain,
> Sense, helpless captive! drags the galling chain.

Pope, Dr. Johnson, Cibber, and Churchill might satirise or denounce these trivial exhibitions, and lament that the stage should be given over to flying chariots, grinning dragons, and practicable eggs, but they were powerless

to confine the public appetite to the plain fare of tragedy and comedy, unable to persuade them

> To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,
> For useful mirth and salutary woe.

It was in a magnificent attempt to outdo the spectacular triumphs of John Rich at Covent Garden, called the *Chinese Festival*, that Garrick brought on his head riotous demonstrations of indignation at Drury Lane. He had engaged for this pantomime some French performers, and, as England was at the time at war with France, the Jingoes of the day thought they could not better display their rampant patriotism than by inflicting a thousand pounds' worth of damage on the property of a manager who had dared to engage a handful of French artists.

A riot and the demolition of the front of his house were contingencies that a theatrical manager in the eighteenth century had to be prepared to face; instances of such proceedings abound in the theatrical memoirs of the time; an alteration in prices, an unpopular regulation by the managers, the employment of foreigners, the non-appearance of an artist, the reported ill-usage of a popular actor, the resentment of a player at some act of aristocratic impertinence, all these trivial causes on different occasions led to violent tumults, the tearing up of seats, the wanton destruction of furniture and decorations. Resolute men like Quin and Beard, the managers of Covent Garden, would withstand the rioters; the more timorous Garrick would bend before the storm; but it was on very rare occasions that the managers received any compensation for their loss. Apart from the fact that the punishment of having his theatre gutted was quite out of proportion to the offence the manager might have committed, this riotous disposition of certain portions of the audience was sometimes made use of by some mean and worthless individual to gratify—as in the case of the rascally Fitzpatrick—some

private spite. Quarrels and controversies of any kind in the eighteenth century, literary or theatrical, were fought out with a vigour, an absence of decorum, and an unscrupulousness of attack that enliven, if they do not always edify, the reader.

One who bore himself stoutly on all such occasions—a sturdy and hard-hitting adversary, who killed two of his fellow-actors in duels, not, be it said, of his own seeking, was James Quin. He fills the most prominent place in the theatrical history of those nine years that elapsed between the retirement of Cibber in 1732 and the first appearance of David Garrick in 1741. The son of an Irish barrister, himself intended for the Bar, lack of means and consciousness of ability sent Quin on to the stage. He made his first success in 1720, when he persuaded Christopher Rich to allow him to appear as Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. After Booth's death he advanced still further in public esteem by what he modestly described on the play-bill as "his attempt" to follow that tragedian in his greatest part of Cato. He so delighted the audience by his attempt that, after his delivery of the line:

Thanks to the gods—my boy has done his duty!

they cried "Booth outdone! Booth outdone!" and after he had spoken the then famous soliloquy on the immortality of the soul, the enthusiasm reached such a pitch that, in answer to a vociferous demand for an "encore," Quin was obliged to repeat the speech. From this night Quin, as an actor, reigned supreme for ten years. It was a solemn reign, dignified, weighty, traditional; he was unsurpassed in such characters as Falstaff and Sir John Brute, but in tragedy he did no more than uphold, with fine elocution, ponderous majesty, and rugged independence, that solemn unreality of speech and action which, both in England and France, was then considered the appropriate expression of tragic sentiment. As in France Le Kain was the first to

restore nature to tragic acting, so did Garrick in England, by a similar return to nature, expose the dulness, the lifelessness of the settled methods of the actors of the type of Quin. And Quin had too much good sense not to see it himself, for as a man he was the rather coarse embodiment of that rough but ready-witted, prejudiced but generous and warm-hearted disposition which we admire and respect in Dr. Johnson. The few of Quin's sayings preserved to us almost make one regret that he had no Boswell by his side. Lords and bishops, clergy and gentry, all were represented in the circles of Quin's many friends who delighted in his wit and conversation. He could hold his own in argument with any man. One instance must suffice. At some gathering Bishop Warburton, dictatorial and overbearing, was arguing in support of royal prerogative. Quin said he was a republican, and thought that perhaps even the execution of Charles I. by his subjects might be justified: "Ay," asked the indignant Warburton, "by what law?" "By all the laws he had left them," answered Quin. The shocked Bishop then cited the wrath of the divine judgment as visited upon the regicides; they all, he said (though it is not strictly true) had come to violent ends. "I would not advise your lordship," said Quin, "to make use of that inference, for, if I am not mistaken, that was the case with the twelve apostles." Horace Walpole greatly admired this instance of the player's readiness and aptness of retort.

Quin's kindness and generosity to Thomson, the poet, and the unfortunate Mrs. Bellamy, eloquently attest the real worth of the vigorous, downright, resolute old actor, who said, on his deathbed, after drinking a bottle of claret, "I could wish that the last tragic scene was over; and I hope I may be enabled to meet and pass through it with dignity."

Quin had retired from the stage some fifteen years before his death; he had become the warm friend of his rival,

Garrick, who wrote the epitaph engraved on his monument in the Abbey church at Bath:

> That tongue which set the table in a roar,
> And charmed the public ear, is heard no more!
> Closed are those eyes, the harbingers of wit,
> Which spake before the tongue what Shakespeare writ:
> Cold is that hand, which, living, was stretched forth
> At Friendship's call, to succour modest worth.
> Here lies James Quin—Deign, reader, to be taught
> Whate'er thy strength of body, force of thought,
> In Nature's happiest mould however cast,
> To this complexion thou must come at last.

If the period of Quin's popularity had reared no great actors, four actresses, who were to contribute in no slight degree to the splendour of the reign of Garrick, had, in those ten years, been advancing rapidly to the very front of their profession. Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, and Margaret Woffington, all these ladies had already established their artistic reputations when, in the year 1741, a young man of twenty-three, who, said the play-bill, had never appeared on any stage before, leapt into fame by his performance of Richard III. at a second-rate London theatre. Mrs. Cibber was a sister of Dr. Arne, the celebrated musician. Charmed by her singing voice, her brother had sent her into opera. Colley Cibber heard her; he was disappointed with her singing, but convinced that her speaking voice would, if properly trained, carry her far in the legitimate drama. He set about instructing her, was astonished at her rapid progress, and permitted her to make her first appearance at Drury Lane in 1736, in the character of Zara in an adaptation of Voltaire's *Zaire*. Before this event, Miss Arne had had the misfortune to marry her teacher's son, Theophilus. Than this Theophilus Cibber a more despicable scoundrel has seldom disgraced any calling; mean and contemptible to the last degree, a bully and a coward, the younger Cibber has only

found one apologist for his turpitude. This writer attributes the peculiar baseness of Theophilus to the unhappy fact that he was born during the progress of the awful and memorable storm that raged over London on the night of November 26th, 1703. Such a convulsion of nature occurring at his birth may explain, if it cannot reconcile us to, the depravity of Theophilus Cibber. In Goldsmith's opinion it required a somewhat similar interposition of nature to save Theophilus Cibber from his ultimate fate, the gallows; he was drowned at sea during a violent storm in the Irish Channel. When his wife made her *début* at Drury Lane they had only been married two years, and Theophilus in the prologue pleaded for the indulgence of the audience:

> But now the Player,
> With trembling heart, prefers his humble prayer.
> To-night the greatest venture of her life
> Is lost, or saved, as you receive—a wife.
> . . . . . .
> If she conveys the pleasing passions right,
> Guard and support her this decisive night.
> If she mistakes—or finds her strength too small,
> Let interposing pity—break her fall.
> In you it rests to save her or destroy;
> If she draws tears from you, I weep—for joy.

We may presume that Theophilus did on this occasion shed tears of joy, for his wife's success was immediate, and in those days a wife's independent earnings were her husband's property. Cibber's profligacy and extravagance were as shameless as they were insatiate. He soon made wreck of his married life. Having connived at his wife's dishonour in order to get money from her lover, he then sued the gentlemen for damages, and so persecuted Mrs. Cibber, that for two years she left the London stage. A truce having been patched up, she returned in 1742, and appeared as Desdemona at Covent Garden. She played

the part of the ill-used wife with such real fervour and pathos, that the audience, quick to recognise the significance of the occasion, overwhelmed her with unwonted applause. From that moment Mrs. Cibber was restored to her place in the public favour. As an actress Mrs. Cibber was remarkable for an extreme sensibility to all that was tender and pathetic. As Constance in *King John* no actress could approach her; her delivery of the lines:

> Here I and sorrow sit;
> This is my throne, bid kings come bow to it;

her scream of agony as she left the stage exclaiming:

> Oh, Lord! my boy! my Arthur! my fair son!—

these things lived in the memory of those who witnessed them as supremely tragic in their expression. The great fault of Mrs. Cibber's acting, less intolerable then than now, was the highpitched "demi-chant," as it was called, in which she recited rather than spoke her lines; she must have learnt this method of speaking from old Cibber, who tried to force it on his daughter-in-law's rival, Mrs. Pritchard, when she was to play Constance in his adaptation of *King John*. Mrs. Pritchard, an actress of great, if somewhat rough and unrefined, power, would have none of Cibber's instruction; she preferred untutored nature to antiquated art; she opposed to the charm and tenderness of Mrs. Cibber in Juliet and Desdemona the tragic force of her Hermione and Lady Macbeth—in the opinion of Mrs. Siddons the greatest of all Lady Macbeths. Mrs. Pritchard was a player born and bred. Her first appearance had been made at Bartholomew Fair; with her acting was an instinct; it was said that she had never read more of the play of *Macbeth* than her own part. Rachel has been accused of somewhat similar ignorance. Talma, the great French actor, declares that sensibility of temperament and intelligence are the two principal ingredients

that go to the making of an actor, but claims the first to be more essential to the artist than the second. If he had to choose between the actor of sensibility and the actor of intelligence, Talma declares he would unhesitatingly select the former. Dr. Johnson said that Mrs. Pritchard in private life was a "vulgar idiot," but on the stage seemed inspired by gentility and understanding. Here surely is a striking instance of what Talma says can be achieved by sensibility of temperament, uninformed by any great intelligence. Mrs. Pritchard was a woman of umblemished virtue. To those who are inclined to believe that the lives of players are little more than a series of scandalous chronicles, the private lives of these eighteenth-century actors and actresses would come, if they took the trouble to read them, as something of a surprise; to some readers, perhaps, something of a disappointment. They hardly yield as much scandalous entertainment as those of the princes and noblemen of the day. When we consider the great temptation that beset the actresses of this time, the fierce light that beat upon the most private concerns of the popular player, the history of the eighteenth-century theatre provokes fewer blushes than we might suppose. Occasionally an unhappy career, like that of the unfortunate Miss Bellamy, would tempt some hack writer to put together a spurious memoir of her frailties; Mrs. Baddeley might, for a price, lend her name to an account of her singular adventures; but, broadly speaking, we shall find the lives of these famous actors and actresses—Betterton, Wilks, Booth, Garrick, Macklin, Barry, Henderson, John Kemble, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Siddons—as decorous as those of other people; while even Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Woffington—ladies of not wholly unblemished reputation—were quite seemly in the unconventionality of their private circumstances, and not less popular and acceptable in society than their more respectable colleagues.

While Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Pritchard were winning their way to fame as tragic actresses, Mrs. Woffington and Mrs. Clive were proving themselves to be rare comedians. Mrs. Woffington captivated a London audience in 1740 by her appearance as Sir Harry Wildair in Farquhar's play of that name. This had been one of Wilks's great parts; but the piquancy and charm of Margaret Woffington's performance of this dashing young spark eclipsed all former memories. From that night till her premature death at forty-two, Mrs. Woffington reigned supreme in the higher comedy. She could play Ophelia, Jane Shore, Hermione, and play them well; but it was in such parts as Rosalind, in portraying fine ladies of high degree, that this daughter of a Dublin bricklayer was unequalled by any rival. The actress who so shocked the Duchess of Queensberry on her visit to the green-room by shouting, with a pot of porter in her hand, "Confusion to all order!" was the ideal representative of the Lady Townleys and Lady Betty Modishes of polite comedy. Mrs. Clive, also an Irishwoman, but of gentle birth, could not approach Mrs. Woffington in characters that called for refinement and distinction of bearing; she was rather a low than a high comedian, the best "romp," Dr. Johnson declared, he ever saw; the first of "chambermaids," a type of character almost extinct on the modern stage, but a favourite one in the comedies and farces of the eighteenth century. Mrs. Clive was one of the fortunate few who escaped the awful censure of Churchill:

> First giggling, plotting chambermaids arrive,
> Hoydens and romps, led on by General Clive.
> In spite of outward blemishes, she shone,
> For humour famed, and humour all her own:
> Easy as if at home the stage she trod,
> Nor sought the critic's praise, nor feared his rod
> Original in spirit and in ease,
> She pleased, by hiding all attempts to please.

One attempt of Clive's to please, and that a blatant one, must have made the judicious shudder, though we are told she carried it through successfully. When she played Portia the actress sought to enliven the part by giving in the trial scene imitations of some of the leading advocates of the day. With a burlesque Portia and, as was then the fashion, a comic Shylock, the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice* must have afforded in these days quite a rollicking entertainment.

Both Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Woffington were generous, good-hearted women, who spent the greater part of their earnings in supporting poor relations; very troublesome in the theatre, worrying the life out of their managers, and quarrelling violently at times with each other. On one occasion the two Irish ladies fell out in the green-room about their respective powers to draw good houses; they used most violent language to each other, and Mrs. Clive's brother caught hold of the jaw of an Irish admirer of Mrs. Woffington, Mr. MacSwiney. "Let go my jaw, you villain!" exclaimed MacSwiney. "Throw down your cane!" cried Mrs. Clive's brother; and the ladies abused each other roundly, until the manager, fearing their voices would be heard on the stage, put an end to the scene. But, in spite of occasional outbursts of spleen, which in ladies of uncertain temper the atmosphere of the theatre is liable to provoke, Mrs. Woffington and Mrs. Clive were both lovable creatures. "Forgive her one female error," said a friend and contemporary of Margaret Woffington, "and she was adorned with every virtue; honour, truth, benevolence, and charity were her distinguishing qualities." Her last appearance was strangely pathetic. She was in no condition of health on the night of May 3rd, 1757, to play Rosalind; but she had never disappointed an audience, and, like many an actor before and since, her pride would not allow her to fail in her duty to the public. She went on to the stage and played the part as saucily and prettily

as ever until she reached the epilogue. Then, as she spoke to the audience the lines, "If I were among you, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me," she paused, lost all power of speech, and fell stricken with paralysis. She lingered for two years a hopeless invalid, two years which "partook," says one author, "of all that was blameless in her previous life."

The year 1741 was memorable in the great theatre of European history for the first appearance, as a leading actor in the affairs of Europe, of the great Frederick; in the small world of the London stage this year was no less memorable for the first appearance of a player who not only in his own country was to reign supreme as the greatest actor and most accomplished manager of his time, but was to be famous and admired in Europe as no English actor had ever been before. In the history of the English drama there are two great occasions on which an actor, hitherto unknown to the London public, won an immediate triumph on his first appearance before a scanty and sceptical audience, converted, by the force of his genius, cold critics into astonished admirers, and achieved this signal success in a play which had in it no element of novelty, but depended almost entirely for its interest that night on the performance of the particular player. One such occasion was David Garrick's performance of Richard III. at the Goodman's Fields Theatre, on October 19th, 1741; a second the first appearance of Edmund Kean as Shylock at Drury Lane, on January 26th, 1814. Garrick was only twenty-three years of age at the time of his first appearance, Kean twenty-seven. But Kean had been on the stage since his childhood; Garrick had only played a short season at Ipswich before he faced the ordeal at Goodman's Fields. Garrick was an actor born, if ever there was one, "an actor, a complete actor, and nothing but an actor," says Dibdin, "as Pope, during the whole course of his life, was a poet and nothing but a poet."

It was Pope who, on seeing Garrick play, declared the young man never had his equal as an actor, and never would have a rival. Garrick had rivals, plenty of them, during his career, Quin, Macklin, Barry, Mossop, Henderson; but they never seriously affected his position; they may have played some parts better than he, but they could not challenge his versatility, the fire and rapidity, the liveliness and spirit of all that he did and said on the stage. The moment of his appearance was undoubtedly propitious for the success of one gifted as he was; there is something naïve in the reasons assigned by the writers of the day for the peculiar impression made by the young actor; they reveal a deplorable condition of the stage, the prevalence of a thoroughly vicious and meaningless style of acting. The critics are astonished that Mr. Garrick should identify himself so completely with his part, that he should speak naturally and not in the accustomed "demi-chant," his voice neither whining, bellowing, nor grumbling: he neither struts nor minces, is neither stiff nor slouching. "When others are on the stage with him," they remark with astonishment, "he is attentive to whatever is spoke, and never drops his character when he has finished his speech, by either looking contemptuously on an inferior performer, unnecessary spitting, or suffering his eyes to wander through the whole circle of spectators." Here was indeed a Daniel come to judgment, if these virtues in Garrick attest the vices of the older actors; the success of this mercurial youth, the grandson, be it remembered, of French refugees, graceful, easy, vivacious in an unwonted degree, is less surprising when it comes as a relief from such a style of acting as these criticisms suggest. Macklin, an actor of far less spirit, had, earlier in the same year, made a profound impression by breaking away from theatrical convention in his performance of Shylock. He, as I described in my previous lecture, made the Jew for the first time a serious character. Physically a man of strong and rugged feature,

rough, a "sour-faced dog," according to Fielding, Macklin imported into the part of Shylock an element of the strong and terrible that has never been equalled. When Sir Robert Walpole lamented to King George II. that there was no way of frightening the House of Commons, the King, who had the night before visited Drury Lane, and been greatly impressed by Macklin's performance, replied, "What do you think of sending them to the theatre to see that Irishman play Shylock?" But Macklin was an actor very limited in his capacity; hard, without charm, ill-suited to any but unsympathetic and strongly marked characters—a vain, quarrelsome, and disappointed man, who for a time became a tavern-keeper in order that he might deliver lectures to his customers, after they had dined, on theatrical history and the art of acting; who taught elocution, and taught it well, and at eighty-two wrote a much-admired comedy, *The Man of the World*, in which he himself created the famous part of Sir Pertinax McSycophant. Macklin was the very antithesis to Garrick; the surly, grudging actor of ability, opposed to the polite and insinuating actor of genius.

Of this genius of Garrick's how difficult it is to form for one's self, much more to convey to others, any adequate notion! A rather short figure, but perfectly symmetrical and graceful in all its movements, dark, restless piercing eyes, and a face mobile in every feature; these would seem to have been the physical characteristics of the player. Many critics dwell on the completeness of his physical equipment, the perfect harmony of voice, feature, and figure, that made them unite with imperceptible ease to give expression to the actor's thought. Grimm, the French philosopher, describes with enthusiasm the skill and conviction with which Garrick got up in a drawing-room and, after thrilling his hearers by his delivery of the "dagger" speech in *Macbeth*, convulsed them with laughter by his imitation of a baker's boy who, carrying a tray of cakes on

his head, lets it fall into the mud and bursts into tears at his misfortune. This drawing-room performance epitomises the whole art of the player who could achieve equal success in the pathetic tragedy of *Lear* and the low comedy of *Abel Drugger*. And this success was gained by a natural, unforced, spontaneous method of playing that astonished and delighted both an English and a French spectator, for the French stage in those days suffered, as the English, from the conventional actor's sing-song, mechanical habit of ladling out his lines. In all probability Lear was Garrick's greatest part. Here, in spite of his comparative shortness, of the unsuitability of his attire—he walked with a crutch—his delivery of the curse was held to be terrific, his madness simple and pathetic. The testimony of his fellow-players is perhaps the most conclusive of his extraordinary powers. Mrs. Siddons was terrified by the power of his eye in *Richard III.*; Mrs. Clive swore he could act a gridiron; Bannister said that in *Lear* his very stick acted; Smith wrote, "I never can speak of him but with idolatry, and have ever looked upon it as one of the greatest blessings of my life to have lived in the days of Garrick." Garrick had his limitations; in parts such as Othello, Faulconbridge, Hotspur, where physical force and powerful declamation were demanded, he was inadequate. But these failures were, as a contemporary critic observed, "spots on the sun, only visible to long-sighted astronomers." As an actor from the age of twenty-three till he retired at fifty-nine, Garrick was the greatest master and exponent of his art.

III

When we turn to the other side of his career, that of a manager of a theatre, for thirty years joint-manager of Drury Lane, the story wears a different aspect. In spite of his triumphs as an artist, in spite of the success of his management, the wealth and prosperity his calling brought

him, the reader of Garrick's biography cannot fail to be surprised, astonished, indignant at the worries and mortifications that made the player's life as a theatrical manager anxious and miserable. Never was man so tried, so ill-treated, so badgered and worried by players, authors, critics, even by those who called themselves his friends. His peculiar, his phenomenal success, unequalled by that of any previous actor, roused up all that envy and uncharitableness which even religion has sometimes sanctioned when it has been employed against the theatre. Prejudice in the shape of Dr. Johnson, envy in the person of Macklin, resentment in that of Churchill, disappointment in that of Smollett, foppery in that of Fitzpatrick, and villainy in that of Hiffernan, all these mischievous qualities were at different times exerted to injure or distress Garrick. As Mr. Fitzgerald has justly observed, one of the most curious features about Garrick's relations with certain of his contemporaries is the fact that men otherwise reputed decent and honest by posterity, should, in their relations with him, descend to all manner of meanness and dissimulation. This is indeed a curious circumstance, only to be explained if we consider the very peculiar position occupied by the successful actor in the eighteenth century. Courted and caressed by the greatest in the land on one side, he was every now and then rudely reminded that he belonged to what some were pleased to consider an inferior and despised calling, and was held fair game for persecution and insult at the hands of all sorts and conditions of men. When a member of this calling was seen to be brilliantly successful, popular and admired, and, above all, rich and prosperous, envy filled the breasts of less prosperous persons who held themselves to be vastly superior to mere players, rage stirred up the bile of incompetent playwrights whose wretched dramas the player had dared to reject, a desire to pull down what they had set up seized hold of the more malicious part of their audience; and so the most unworthy

cause, the most human infirmity, the most trivial error, would be seized upon as a weapon with which to strike at the unprotected player. Fully allowing for their very venial imperfections of character, humanity has seldom displayed itself in more odious colours than in its treatment of David Garrick and Mrs. Siddons at certain periods of their careers; success was dearly bought that could bring with it such ignoble treatment, such underserved humiliation.

But it is certain literary gentlemen and dramatists who, above all others, cut such sorry figures in their dealings with Garrick—Smollett, Ralph the historian, Churchill, even Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson. There has been at all times a certain resentment on the part of some writers against the player, against his immediate fame, the reward he reaps in his own lifetime, the adulation he receives in his own person, even the high rate at which he is considered to be paid for his labour. It is a form of jealousy that has warped many otherwise enlightened minds; an envy that forgets that a capacity to act is a much rarer gift than a capacity to write, that, ephemeral as is the actor's art, it is by way of compensation more vivid in its appeal, more immediate in its effect, than any other form of art. Bishop Tillotson asked Betterton how it was that a player exercised a vaster power over human sympathies than a preacher. "You in the pulpit," was Betterton's answer, "only tell a story; I show facts." It is to the shower of facts that the public heart goes out in a way that distresses, irritates, provokes those who judge the worth of the player from the impressive nonsense that Dr. Johnson talked about his art, or the unsympathetic reflections of Charles Lamb. Dr. Johnson's disparagement of play-acting may be allowed to pass; being short-sighted and hard of hearing, the doctor could hardly have been in a position to appreciate the full significance of what was passing on a stage; but his personal treatment of Garrick is difficult to explain on

any other ground than that of rather unworthy jealousy. The friendship that Garrick had showed him in producing, to the best of his ability, the sage's unendurable tragedy of *Irene*, was poorly repaid by the ill-natured picture Johnson drew of his friend in No. 200 of the *Rambler*, a number published on the very morning that Garrick, always sensitive and nervous, was to make his first appearance in a new part. The spiteful depreciation of Garrick in the character of Prospero is in no worse taste than the self-glorification of Johnson as the rugged Asper. That Johnson should have been a little envious of the wealth that was being accumulated by his old friend is natural; they had started life together; Garrick, the more energetic of the two, had outstripped the indolent Johnson in the acquisition of the good things of this world; but, as Leslie Stephen wrote, "a grave moral philosopher has no right to look askance at the rewards which fashion lavishes upon men of lighter and less lasting merit which he professes to despise." Johnson's depreciation of acting is ignorant and unfeeling—the utterance of a Philistine; his behaviour to Garrick, in more ways than one, grudging and ungenerous; he was not philosopher enough to accept with equanimity either the failure of his own tedious play, or the success of his old schoolfellow. Throughout Johnson's life, by the side of occasional commendation of Garrick, runs a constant stream of depreciation of the man and unjust ridicule of his art.

Smollett's conduct towards Garrick is a good specimen of the kind of treatment the actor had to endure from even a celebrated man. Garrick had politely, and with the usual protestations of regret, rejected a bad play of Smollett's called *The Regicide*. In *Roderick Random* the author takes his revenge by drawing a portrait of Garrick under the significant name of Mr. Marmozet. Thus he writes: "It is not for the qualities of his heart that this little parasite is invited to the tables of dukes

and lords, who hire cooks for his entertainment; his avarice they see not, his ingratitude they feel not, his hypocrisy accommodates itself to their humours, and is of consequence pleasing: but he is chiefly courted for his buffoonery, and will be admitted into the choicest parties for his talent of mimicking Punch and his wife Joan."

This attack appeared in 1748; but in 1757 we find Smollett, in his *History of England*, lauding Garrick to the skies for his genius as an actor and the service which, as a manager, he had done the English stage. What has occurred in the interval to bring about this sudden change from venomous attack to glowing panegyric? Why, in this same year, 1757, we find Garrick producing at Drury Lane a patriotic farce of Smollett's called *Reprisal, or the Tars of Old England*, and paying him well for it. From this moment Smollett is his contrite friend.

Garrick's biography teems with unpleasant experiences of this kind. He procures from Mr. Pelham the minister, by his influence, and his influence alone, a pension for Ralph the historian; but because he will not perform Ralph's stupid plays, all gratitude is forgotten, and the author attacks the actor in a pamphlet in which he holds Garrick responsible for the present deplorable state of a theatre that rejects the masterpieces of Mr. Ralph. It should be added that a play of Ralph's, called *The Astrologer*, had been produced in 1744, and on the second night of its run the theatre had to be closed for want of an audience.

Again, Garrick helps with money one Hiffernan, an Irish adventurer, and allows a play of his to be put on at Drury Lane; but it is so unsuccessful that it convinces everybody but the author of his utter incapacity to please an audience. Thereupon Hiffernan writes and threatens to publish what Davies described as a "bloody libel" on the private character of Garrick. As the name of his wife

was concerned in the libel, Garrick, on hearing of Hiffernan's intention, paid the blackmailer to suppress it.

Dodsley, Hawkins, Mrs. Griffith, and many another author whose merit neither Garrick nor anybody else could perceive, vented their spleen against the manager by ascribing to all manner of unworthy motives his rejection of their plays.

But the case of the poet Churchill is perhaps the most interesting. In 1761 this very irregular clergyman woke to find himself famous by the publication of his poem *The Rosciad*, a dramatic review in satirical verse of all the leading actors of the day. Small wonder that its publication caused a panic among the players, for some of them were scourged cruelly, their imperfections ruthlessly exposed in cutting verses. Poor Tom Davies, afterwards Garrick's biographer, was driven from the stage by the lines :

> Statesman all over, in plots famous grown,
> He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone.

An assiduous but mediocre actor, one Havard, is thus described :

> His easy, vacant face proclaim'd a heart
> Which could not feel emotions, nor impart.

Yates, an admirable comedian, whose only infirmity was an imperfect memory, which he would try to conceal by repeating his words over again, or using some such expression as "Hark ye! hark ye!" until he could remember what came next, is thus hit off:

> Lo Yates ! Without the least finesse of art
> He gets applause.—I wish he'd get his part !
> When live Impatience is in full career,
> How vilely "Hark ye ! hark ye !" grates the ear !
> When active fancy from the brain is sent,
> And stands on tip-toe for some wish'd event,
> I hate those careless blunders, which recall
> Suspended sense, and prove it fiction all.

Macklin is not spared, Macklin,

> Whose acting's hard, affected, and constrain'd,
> Whose features, as each other they disdain'd,
> At variance set, inflexible and coarse,
> Ne'er know the workings of united force.

Mossop, an Irish actor of power and vehemence, but awkward and ungainly in his movements, who, possessed of a strong voice and unbounded vanity, was considered, after Garrick and Barry, the leading tragedian of his day, did not please the satirist; he practised what was known as the teapot attitude—that is, he sawed the air too much with the right hand:

> Mossop, attach'd to military plan,
> Still kept his eye fixed on his right-hand man;
> Whilst the mouth measures words with seeming skill,
> The right hand labours, and the left lies still.
> For he, resolved on Scripture grounds to go,
> What the right doth, the left hand shall not know.

Mossop's emphasis was evidently eccentric:

> With studied impropriety of speech,
> He soars beyond the [illegible]kney critic's reach;
> To epithets allots emph[illegible] state,
> Whilst principals, ungrac[illegible] like lackeys, wait.
> . . . . . .
> Conjunction, preposition, adv[illegible]b join
> To stamp new vigour on the n[illegible]rvous line;
> In monosyllables his thunders roll,
> He, she, it, and, we, ye, they, fright the soul.

Even the elegant and admired Barry did not escape censure. As Hamlet, in Churchill's opinion, he anticipated too prematurely the appearance of his father's ghost:

> Some dozen lines before the ghost is there,
> Behold him for the solemn scene prepare;
> See how he frames his eyes, poises each limb,
> Puts the whole body into proper trim—
> From whence we learn, with no great stretch of art,
> Five lines hence comes a ghost, and ha! a start.

Perhaps the most masterly lines, as they are certainly the most severe in the whole poem, are those describing the imperfections of an obscure actor named Jackson, afterwards lessee of the Edinburgh theatre.

> By Nature formed in her perversest mood,
> With no one requisite of art endued,
> Next Jackson came—Observe that settled glare,
> Which better speaks the puppet than the player;
> List to that voice—did ever Discord hear
> Sounds so well fitted to her untuned ear?
> When to enforce some very tender part
> The right hand slips by instinct to the heart,
> His soul, of every other thought bereft,
> Is anxious only where to place the left.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Awkward, embarrass'd, stiff, without the skill
> Of moving gracefully, or standing still,
> One leg, as if suspicious of his brother,
> Desirous seems to run away from t'other.

Fortunately Churchill was a burly man—"the clumsy curate of Clapham," Foote called him—or some of the players might have wreaked physical vengeance on their assailant. As it was, Davies, who, although one of the sufferers, gives a very candid account of the affair, describes the censured actors as running about like "stricken deer." Garrick found himself in an awkward position. He alone of all the players was wholly praised by the poet, he alone declared worthy to fill the chair once occupied by Roscius. His colleagues, smarting under the lash, felt a natural resentment at his immunity. Garrick, always anxious to please all parties, affected to think lightly of Churchill's eulogy, and ascribed it to a desire on Churchill's part to obtain free admission to Drury Lane. Garrick's sentiments were repeated to the poet, who resented them bitterly and determined to punish such ingratitude. He sat down and wrote *The Apology*, which was intended to reply to the indignant actors and literary critics of *The Rosciad*, and at

the same time drag down Garrick from his former eminence. Bitterly he poured contempt and ridicule on the luckless strolling players of the day, from whose necessitous ranks was soon to emerge the genius of Mrs. Siddons; players were the "lowest sons of earth"; and Garrick "a hero from a puppet-show."

> Forgetful of himself, he rears his head,
> And scorns the dunghill, where he first was bred.
> . . . . .
> Let the vain tyrant sit amidst his guards,
> His puny green-room wits and venal bards,
> Who meanly tremble at the puppet's frown,
> And for a playhouse freedom lose their own.
> . . . . .
> Ne'er will I flatter, cringe, or bend the knee
> To those who, slaves to all, are slaves to me.

Garrick, conscious that by his own indiscretion he had incurred this scathing attack, affected to take it in good part; he wrote to a friend of Churchill expressing his admiration of the poem: "I appear," he wrote, "as I once saw a poor soldier on the parade, who was acting a pleasantry of countenance, while his back was most woefully striped with the cat-o'-nine-tails." From this moment Churchill and Garrick became friends. There is a strange irony in the poet who could pour such scorn upon the straits and distresses of the poor strolling actor, writing, when profligacy and extravagance had played havoc with his fortune, to beg a loan from the player, Garrick:

"Half drunk, half mad, and quite stripped of all my money, I should be much obliged if you would enclose and send by the bearer five pieces, by way of adding to the favours already received by yours sincerely,

"Charles Churchill."

With his usual generosity, Garrick repeatedly assisted the unfortunate poet, up to the hour of his untimely death, in 1764, at the early age of thirty-three.

Of a very different type from Churchill was another of Garrick's tormentors, Mr. Fitzpatrick. His case affords a striking instance of the power that lay in the hands of any unworthy creature to use, or abuse, his opportunity as one of the public to insult and degrade an actor against whom he cherished resentment. Fitzpatrick was an impudent and effeminate Irish fop, whose mincing and wriggling manners were in unpleasant contrast to his large and athletic build. Originally befriended and encouraged by Garrick, he came to think himself a critic, and in order to better display his critical acumen and serve the interests of his fellow-countryman, the tragedian Mossop, he soon turned on Garrick and attacked his acting. Not content with writing his depreciation, he would go to the pit of Drury Lane on the nights Garrick was playing; if it were a tragedy, he and his friends would talk and laugh and utter scornful sounds; if it were a comedy, they would sit with grave and immovable features, while the rest of the audience were laughing heartily. Even off the stage he pursued Garrick with his offensive conduct; at the Shakespeare Club, to which they both belonged, he grossly insulted the great actor. Garrick was moved to retort; he published a passable satire in verse, *The Fribbleriad*, in which Fitzpatrick was ridiculed as chief of the "fribble" tribe of inane and insignificant dandies. Churchill, in *The Rosciad*, took up the parable, and drew an awful picture of the effeminate creature:

> Nor male, nor female; neither and yet both;
> Of neuter gender, though of Irish growth;
> A six-foot suckling, mincing in its gait;
> Affected, peevish, prim and delicate;
> Fearful it seem'd, though of athletic make,
> Lest brutal breezes should too roughly shake
> Its tender form, and savage motion spread,
> O'er its pale cheeks, the horrid manly red.

No one will deny that Fitzpatrick had brought on himself this chastisement, which was well within the rules

of fair play, as literary controversy was conducted in these days. But an actor who indulged in encounters of this kind had a vulnerable spot in his armour at which a coward would not hesitate to strike: he exposed himself, whenever he appeared on the public stage, to any mean or unscrupulous attack his adversary might organise against him. Fitzpatrick found the desired opportunity when Garrick, as manager of Drury Lane, decided to abolish the rule that allowed persons to come into the theatre at half-price after the third act of a play. The measure was, of course, unpopular with a large section of playgoers; to these Fitzpatrick appealed and, under the cloak of public-spirited indignation, determined to gratify his private spite. He organised a riot. On the night of January 25th, 1762, the audience, led by Fitzpatrick, who addressed them in a speech from the front of the boxes, refused Garrick a hearing, tore up the benches, destroyed the furniture, and were only prevented from setting fire to the theatre by the presence of mind of Moody, an Irish player, who stopped a ruffian in the act of setting fire to the scenery. Difficult as it is to believe, Moody's conduct on this occasion was considered most impudent, and when, the following night, he tried to apologise to the audience in a jocular way by saying he was sorry "he had displeased them by saving their lives," they shouted to him to go on his knees and ask pardon for his effrontery. "I will not, by heaven!" answered the resolute Irishman, and walked off the stage. Fitzpatrick and his friends declared Moody should never act again in London; but Moody, having no fear, went to see Fitzpatrick, told him he intended to fight him, and by his firmness compelled the dandy to put a stop to his persecution.

It was this miserable incident, combined with other causes of mortification and disappointment, that impelled Garrick to leave England in 1763 and travel abroad for two years. It was a wise step; not only did he meet with a reception on the Continent such as no English actor before or since has

experienced, but when he returned in 1765 to Drury Lane, he found a public ready to take him once more to their hearts; and until his retirement in 1776 he had no cause to complain of their want of appreciation or respect. But ignoble wretches to the last sought to get money from Garrick by disturbing his peace of mind; by threatening him with the publication of gross libels, and hinting that it was in his power to mitigate their severity by a timely disbursement of ready money. Williams, a Welsh dissenting minister, wrote a scathing personal attack on Garrick as actor and manager, but before publishing it, he writes himself to Garrick, warning him that a pamphlet, eloquently written by a young man of genius, and calculated to do him irreparable mischief, is about to be issued, unless Mr. Garrick "take some method to undeceive the young man." During his last illness an anonymous writer, signing himself "Curtius," threatened the publication of three letters in which Garrick was to be humbled to the dust by the public exposure of his true character, "But," adds "Curtius," in a letter privately sent to Garrick, "if, in the swelling heap of charges they contain, you can obviate some, they shall be expunged." This "Curtius" was a dangerous assailant, no other than the Rev. William Jackson, a disreputable Anglican clergyman, who had killed by a hideous slander Foote, the actor. Foote had caricatured Williams on the stage as "Dr. Viper," and Williams revenged himself by suborning Foote's coachman to bring an infamous charge against his master. The misery of it had brought about Foote's death in 1777. Now, two years later, this time without any provocation, the Rev. William Jackson, *alias* Curtius, employs his foul arts against the dying Garrick. But death outstripped his villainous purposes, and spared Garrick the humiliation of facing this clerical ruffian. Sixteen years after Garrick's death, Jackson committed suicide in the dock in Dublin, when he was about to be condemned to death as a French

spy. It is shocking to think that a man of Garrick's refinement and high character should have been brought into contact with such men as Williams and Jackson. Here we have unabashed blackmailing, not by ordinary criminals, but by reverend persons of education and position, who should have known better than to approach even a player in so vile a habit.

With the members of his own calling Garrick paid the penalty of extraordinary success by encountering jealousy and hostility open and avowed, treacherous and clandestine; but it never amounted to much, nor very seriously disturbed his peace of mind, except in one instance, that of Samuel Foote. This ill-natured humorist was a perpetual thorn in the side of Garrick, as he was in those of a great number of persons. To Foote nothing was sacred from the exercise of his unfeeling wit; a heartless and cowardly buffoon, nothing but the threat of physical chastisement could restrain his malice. Going out to dinner immediately after his wife's death, he entertained the table by an extravagantly comic assumption of grief. "By Foote's buffoonery and broad-faced merriment," said Sir Joshua Reynolds, "private friendship, public decency, and everything estimable among men, were trod underfoot."

> His strokes of humour and his bursts of sport,

says Churchill,

> Are all contained in this one word, distort.
> Doth a man stutter, look asquint, or halt?
> Mimics draw humour out of nature's fault;
> With personal defects their mirth adorn,
> And hang misfortune out to public scorn.

Garrick was not likely to escape from the malicious ridicule of a jester who said of audiences in general: "Who will give money to be told Mr. Such-a-one is wiser and better than himself? Demolish a conspicuous

character, and sink him below our level; then we are pleased, then we chuckle and grin, and toss the half-crown on the counter." Foote, at the Haymarket Theatre, invited the ready half-crowns of his patrons by performing pieces of his own composition, the characters in which were thinly disguised burlesques of well-known persons. Gratitude was a word unknown in the mimic's vocabulary; he might owe Garrick some hundreds of pounds; borrow his scenery, ask favours of him, place himself under all manner of obligations to the other's good nature; none of these considerations could deter him from wounding his benefactor's susceptibilities by holding him up to ridicule on the stage, from scoffing behind his back at his so-called stinginess, pouring contempt on his acting, and vilifying his character. Yet in the hour of his awful misfortune, when he had to defend himself against the vilest slander, Foote found no more loyal friend, no more faithful supporter, than David Garrick.

In considering the controversies, disputes, and misunderstandings that affected the relations of Garrick with certain of his contemporaries, it would be unfair to assert that in many instances Garrick's own faults of character had not contributed to exasperate his opponents, encourage their attacks, provoke their jealousy. "Of inordinate vanity," says one writer in describing Garrick, "at once the most courteous, genial, sore, and sensitive of men; full of kindliness, yet ever quarrelling; scheming for applause, even in the society of his most intimate friends; a clever writer, a wit, and a friend of wits, yet capable of mutilating *Hamlet* and degrading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* into a ballet-opera." This is no very unjust account of the contradictions that are to be found in the character of this remarkable man. Vain—not perhaps inordinately vain—Garrick certainly was, but not half so vain as, in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, he had a right to be; the sage declared he would have had a couple of fellows with

long poles walking before him to knock everybody down if he had enjoyed as much applause and adulation as Garrick. It is true that Garrick was too sensitive to criticism and attack; undoubtedly it was this extreme sensitiveness, his eagerness to anticipate, if he could, unfavourable criticism, even by writing it himself, that provoked envious, malicious, or designing persons to torment him, to see him writhe under their ill-treatment, in some cases to extract money from him as the price of silence. Nor was Garrick sufficiently straightforward and courageous in facing his enemies; he preferred to conciliate, to employ what he called "finesse" with men whose ingratitude and baseness one could have wished he had treated with the scorn and indignation they deserved; his diplomacy, on which he prided himself, only exasperated those on whom he practised it. His very good nature, that made it so difficult for him to say "No," led him to dodge and procrastinate, until those he had not the determination to refuse were worn out and irritated. Garrick loved the notice of the great, the society of persons of rank. So did Dr. Johnson; but he had the courage to say so, whereas Garrick, in his heart delighted, would affect to be unconcerned at a royal command or a nobleman's invitation. Like many great men, he liked to be surrounded by flatterers and dependants, and as such persons are not to be found among men of superior worth, Garrick was reproached for encouraging the sycophancy of such an ignoble crew as the Kenricks and Kellys and Woodfalls.

These were the great actor's failings. I have enumerated them because, without them, it is impossible to do justice to Garrick or his contemporaries; but they were failings in every sense venial and superficial, the natural imperfections of a human character. Had Garrick not been an extraordinarily successful player, an object of envy and resentment to bigoted and prejudiced minds, they would not have been so severely visited on him in his lifetime,

and we should have heard less about them after his death. "In the height of the public admiration for you," wrote Mrs. Clive, who had acted and quarrelled with Garrick all her life, "when you were never mentioned with any other appellation but *the* Garrick, the charming man, the fine fellow, the delightful creature, both by men and ladies; when they were admiring everything you did and everything you scribbled—at this time I was a living witness that they did not know, nor could they be sensible, of half your perfections." If Garrick were vain, ubiquitous, affected, economical in trifles, he was at heart good-natured, forgiving, and noble in his generosity. He gave with a lavish hand to those needy and distressed; they repaid him by treachery and ingratitude; he overlooked their trespass and gave again. No man better deserved his good fortune; no man less deserved the detraction, the envy, the malice that poisoned the cup of his happiness. He raised the dignity of the player, he improved the condition of the theatre. He was a generous and charitable man in the highest sense of the words, a devoted husband, an amiable and accomplished gentleman, in whom the vanity, the sensitiveness, the restlessness of the artist, obscured only from an unfriendly eye a heart that pitied and forgave, a hand ever ready to succour the afflicted, a gentle and a Christian spirit. Davies, who knew Garrick well, no fulsome eulogist, closes his life of the great actor with these words: "No man of his profession had ever been so much the object of admiration; few men were ever more beloved; nor was any man better formed to adorn society, or more sincerely disposed and qualified to serve mankind, than David Garrick."

Of the actors who were Garrick's contemporaries, only one was ever seriously his rival, and that was Spranger Barry. Originally a Dublin silversmith, his failure in business obliged him to turn to some other means of earning a living. His graceful figure, his handsome face,

his musical voice, tempted him to try his fortunes on the stage. He first appeared at the Dublin theatre, then the nursery of many famous players: Quin, Barry, Mossop, Sheridan, Macklin, Mrs. Woffington, Mrs. Clive, and Mrs. Bellamy, all hailed from Ireland. It was at Garrick's suggestion that Barry came to London. His success was immediate. Above all, he charmed the ladies "by the soft melody of his love complaints and the noble ardour of his courtship." He had not Garrick's fire or versatility; he had no gift for comedy; but in such parts as Othello, Romeo, and Alexander the Great, his superior physique, his stately grace, his charming pathos, gave him victory. Nothing can give us a better idea of the difference between the two players than a lady's criticism of their respective performances of Romeo. "Had I been Juliet," she said, "to Garrick's Romeo, so ardent and impassioned was he, I should have expected that he would *come up* to me in the balcony; but had I been Juliet to Barry's Romeo, so tender, so eloquent, and so seductive was he, I should certainly have *gone down* to him." It is no slight proof of Garrick's freedom from jealousy that he was always Barry's friend, and Barry dearly valued his friendship. After a chequered career—he lost a fortune in managing one of the Dublin theatres—Barry died the year after Garrick's retirement, a martyr to gout. Two months later his wife, an accomplished actress, made her re-appearance at Covent Garden in her great part of Lady Randolph in *Douglas*. According to the curious custom of the day, she spoke a prologue, in which she described her lone condition to her audience:

> Of the lov'd pilot of my life bereft,
> Save your protection, not a hope is left.
>
> . . . . .
>
> The tree cut down on which she clung and grew,
> Behold, the propless woodbine clings to you.

With the death of Barry in 1777, the retirement of Garrick the year before, Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Woffington dead, Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Clive in retirement, a generation of great players had passed from the stage. But in 1782 the glory of the theatre was revived by the first appearance of Mrs. Siddons as Isabella in *The Fatal Marriage* at Drury Lane. It was not her first appearance in London. Garrick had engaged her seven years before; but she had not been cast for parts that suited her; her genius was yet immature, and Garrick had failed to detect even the promise of it. Now she astonished and electrified her audience by the power of her declamation, the intensity of her passion. In 1785 she reached the zenith of her greatness by her performance of Lady Macbeth. The year before, old Mrs. Clive, then over seventy years of age, had come up from her retirement at Twickenham to see the new actress who had so taken the town by storm. She was eagerly asked what she thought of her; her reply is a truly delightful criticism: "Think!" she said, "why, I think it's all truth and daylight!" The year after Mrs. Siddons' appearance as Isabella, her brother, John Kemble, had made a distinct success at Drury Lane as Hamlet; it was the beginning of a career honourable and distinguished. The Kembles were the first great players who had sprung from the itinerant ranks of their calling. Their father, Roger, had been a strolling player, and many were the hardships that John Kemble and his brother Stephen would relate of their own strolling days. The adversity of their early lives had given the Kembles—John and Mrs. Siddons—strong and resolute characters; they were honourable, upright, worthy people, with all their rather Crummles-like solemnity, players who supported the dignity and independence of their calling. Their history lies to a great extent in the nineteenth century. The school of acting they introduced had neither the fire and vivacity of that of Garrick, nor the fierceness

and intensity of that of Kean and George Frederick Cooke. With some allowance for the prejudice of an actress whom Mrs. Siddons eclipsed, Mrs. Barry's account of the Kemble style of acting has some truth in it. "The Garrick school," she said, "was all rapidity and passion; while the Kemble school is so full of paw and pause, that, at first, the performers, thinking their new competitors had either lost their cues or forgotten their parts, used frequently to prompt them." That solemn pause, which in theatrical history has become associated with the name of Macready, would seem to have had its origin with the Kembles. But the genius of Mrs. Siddons, the undoubted power of John Kemble in all that was eloquent and dignified in tragedy, these must not be confounded with, or judged by, the mannerisms which their admirers or pupils copied and converted into a habit of acting that had all the faults but none of the genius of the originals. No actor or actress has ever left so unmistakable an impress on those who saw them, won such a unanimous tribute of praise from the most diverse critics as Mrs. Siddons. In tragedy she is supreme in the history of our English theatre. "Of actors," said Lord Byron, "Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural, Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together." We are apt to think to-day that there was something mechanical, stagey, rather unnatural, about even Mrs. Siddons, with all her greatness. Those who would correct such an impression may refer to Charles Young, the actor's, account of her entrance as Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, in the scene of her son's triumph. Most actresses had been content to follow the procession with the conventional stately steps of the tragedy queen; but Mrs. Siddons recollected she was the proud mother of a proud son: "Instead of dropping each foot at equi-distance in cadence subservient to the orchestra, deaf to the guidance of her woman's ear, with head erect and hands pressed

firmly to her bosom, as if to repress by manual force its triumphant swellings, she towered above all around her, and almost reeled across the stage, her very soul, as it were, dilating and rioting in its exultations, until her action lost all grace and yet became so true to nature, so picturesque, and so descriptive, that pit and gallery sprang to their feet, electrified by the transcendent execution of the conception." Few written criticisms can give any real picture of a great piece of acting; this one comes very near to it. We catch a glimpse of the power and originality, the "truth and daylight," as Mrs. Clive called it, of Mrs. Siddons' acting; we see her doing a daring and difficult thing that might well have been absurd or vulgar but for the genius of the artist.

Mrs. Siddons, though a woman, could not escape the penalty of success in those days, any more than Garrick. No sooner had she won her great triumph in London than scurrilous attacks were made on her private character and that of her brother. Her morality being unassailable, Mrs. Siddons was attacked and caricatured as an ungenerous, grasping woman, whose only desire as an artist was to get money, who was deaf to all prayers of suffering or distress, who would even suffer her relatives to starve or subsist on public charity, sooner than give them a shilling of her great earnings. She and her brother were falsely accused of neglecting their aged father, and refusing assistance to their most eccentric sister, Mrs. Curtis. Mrs. Siddons may not have been as liberal with her money as some of her fellow-artists, but we must always remember that she was the mother of five children and supported her husband. Even if there had been any truth in the charges of meanness levelled against her, they were no concern of the public; but that is a later view. At the end of the eighteenth century, in the very zenith of her success, such libellous statements were sufficient to persuade an audience at Drury Lane theatre to greet Mrs. Siddons with yells

and hoots of disapprobation, and compel her to address them in her own defence. The actor was just as exposed at the end of the century as in the time of Garrick to the slander of some malicious penman, or the brutality of an audience. But John Kemble was manfully indifferent to such things, far more resolute in withstanding them than David Garrick. Kemble, with all his affectation of Roman dignity and solemn speech, had a nice sense of humour and a stout heart. It was a happy omen for the theatre when, towards the close of the century, John Kemble became manager of Drury Lane. Though he could not succeed in averting the ruin brought about by Sheridan's disreputable administration, he preserved the stage itself from many of the ill effects of the patentee's unscrupulous extravagance. In 1802, weary of Sheridan, he took a share in the management of Covent Garden Theatre, and throughout the fifteen years that he governed its affairs, upheld those high traditions of theatrical administration, the legacy of Colley Cibber and David Garrick.

The traditions handed down to their successors by these eighteenth-century actors are worthy of the beautiful art they so faithfully pursued. The pure art of acting, unassisted by the collaboration of other arts, received in them its highest expression. The intention of all the arts, says Sir Joshua Reynolds—and he includes the art of the actor among them—is to supply the natural imperfection of things; they are addressed not to the gross senses, but to the desires of the mind, to that spark of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed and pent up by the world that is about us; painting and acting are as far removed from the vulgar idea of imitation as the refined civilised state in which we live is removed from a gross state of nature. I believe that the conditions of the eighteenth-century theatre were peculiarly favourable to the realisation by the actor of these, the highest possibilities of his art, that he had to

make a single, an individual appeal to the imagination, the emotion of his audience which taxed to the full all the resources of art, of temperament, of intelligence, that he possessed.

And to follow his art in this eighteenth century, the would-be player had to be prepared to face difficulties and disadvantages which to-day have disappeared. I have in these lectures been obliged to confine myself to the London stage; we have seen that there the actor had to endure much that was odious, that he was exposed on occasions to treatment which to-day is regarded by all sensible people as a relic of Puritan barbarism. But the ambitious actor who began his career as a strolling player had to endure, if we may accept the reminiscences of John Kemble, such humiliation, ignominy, actual suffering, as only a great devotion to his work could have determined a man of ordinary sensitiveness to go through. Towards the end of the century, however, a great improvement in these conditions took place. Instead of booths and barns, the provincial actor began to find in the more considerable towns theatres ready to receive him. Within a period of ten years, theatres were patented at Edinburgh, Bath, Norwich, York, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Chester, and Bristol, and at the end of the century we find the London "stars," Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, and others, for the first time making tours to the chief provincial centres. The theatre was becoming more and more a part of the life of the people, and, unprotected, unassisted by the State, more and more at the mercy of popular taste. No art that is left to the mercy of popular taste, that has to fight for its existence, can escape some measure of corruption. In the case of every other theatre in Europe, of every other art in England save theatrical art, this truth has been realised. It is the art of the actor that has suffered most in the course of the struggle; long runs, constant performances, no reasonable man will deny, are baneful to the artist

Perhaps some persons in this country may be found who will say that the art of the actor is not worthy of protection or encouragement; there are persons to whom it gives quite exceptional delight to call violinists "fiddlers," writers "ink-slingers," painters "daubers," and actors "mummers." They are the Philistines, and belong to all centuries. We see them at their fell work in the eighteenth as well as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But an impartial study of the history of this eighteenth-century theatre proves to us conclusively that, under propitious conditions, England is a soil as favourable to the production of fine actors as any other, and that the traditions of the English stage are as deserving as those of any other theatre of fostering care and preservation. That any system approaching the conditions of our eighteenth-century theatres could ever be reproduced in our own time may be a vain, a delusive hope; and we shall be perhaps forced to content ourselves with looking back with longing and regret to the splendid vitality, the zealous emulation, the spacious record of those great and palmy days of the English actors.

The Art and Status of the Actor

THE ART AND STATUS OF THE ACTOR[1]

On the only occasion on which I had the pleasure of attending one of the ordinary meetings of the Playgoers' Club, I heard a very entertaining paper read on the subject of "The Overrated Drama," in which the extravagant proportions to which the business of the theatre had attained at the present moment were feelingly deplored and pleasantly satirised. With your permission I would to-night, for a short space, direct your attention to an integral part of this inflated factor in our modern life —I mean the overrated actor; and I would ask you to look with me into some of the popular fallacies that still lurk around the theatre, its art, and the exponents of its art.

Though the art of the actor has become firmly fixed in the respect and esteem of most thinking men, one is still liable to meet with occasional outbursts of vigorous and unsparing denunciation directed against this particular art and the calling it employs. When these diatribes are sincere, when they do not bear evident marks of personal spleen or rancour, we are naturally led to ask ourselves what is the cause or causes from which they spring, for there must be some reason for manifestations of this kind, however extravagant they may at first appear. I believe that if we look into them we shall find

[1] Read before the O. P. Club, April, 1901, and reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review.*

that their origin is to be traced to the peculiar conditions of the histrionic art, to illusions it cherishes in the minds of many even of its admirers, to prejudices it excites in the minds of persons ignorant of its real working, to the envy and hostility it evokes from those who regard its glittering triumphs and widespread popularity as unalloyed with serious endeavour, with anxiety and disappointment, with those cares and troubles that are the universal accompaniments of every other form of human undertaking. By examining some of these fallacies, by trying to see the art and position of the actor as it really is, by seeing how easily men may frame mistaken ideas of the purposes and achievements of the theatre, it may be possible to explain, if not to allay, these periodical bursts of indignation, to disarm of some of their terrors the last eruptions of the now almost extinct volcano of anti-theatrical prejudice.

If we are to pay attention to the note of alarm and distress sounded by one or two writers, we must believe that the inflation of the actor has reached a degree of tumefaction that brings him very near to bursting point; in his efforts to swell himself out to the proportions of other artists, or to emulate the ways and manners of the real ladies and gentlemen with whom, by a deplorable relaxation of social restraints, he has been allowed to mingle, he is approaching within measurable distance of the melancholy catastrophe that overtook the too ambitious frog. For my own part, I believe that this alarming picture of the aggrandisement of the actor is rather a nightmare caused by an over-indulgence in trivial gossip and unimportant newspaper paragraphs than a real presentation of a crying evil. The public at large are, I feel certain, practically unmoved by the case that has been put before them. Those who have lent themselves to the promotion of the actor from the outskirts of social respectability, and have admitted him into the gilded saloons of the aristocracy in which he is, by some people,

supposed to uneasily disport himself, have acted in obedience to the levelling spirit of an age that has broken down barriers which class distinction or religious prejudice had set up; and as the actor has borne himself with a sufficient grace and an abstention from actual outrage equal to that displayed by successful merchants or musicians under similar circumstances, our social leaders are not likely to at present revoke the privilege accorded to him, at the bidding of those who represent him as a standing menace to a well-conducted household. For playgoers, keenly interested in the actor as they see him on the stage and follow him in the exercise of his art, it is a matter, I am sure, of supreme indifference whether the player's doings are assiduously and often indiscreetly chronicled in the press, or whether he is received into gilded saloons, be they those of noblemen or those not infrequently associated with spirituous refreshment. To most reasonable men, the social position of any body of artists signifies little: it is to their achievements in their respective fields of art that men look with interest and anxiety. But if competent judges admire an actor's work, if they see in it evidences of high intelligence and careful study, they will be rather pleased than dissatisfied that such work should meet with recognition from those who are in a position to encourage and stimulate such talent or genius as we may have amongst us, whatever the form of artistic effort in which it chooses to manifest itself. No unworthy feeling of envy would arise in their minds on seeing an art that, in its higher manifestations, has a long record of well-accredited genius, raised from an unworthy obscurity, which had formerly re-acted with baleful effect on the lives and characters of its exponents; they would rather rejoice that, in the words of Hazlitt, "the actor has now an opportunity of being as respectable as he may be, because his profession is respected as it ought to be."

At the same time, it is not unnatural that the rapid advancement in certain directions of a calling, long regarded with contempt and disapproval by a large section of our countrymen, should have excited in some breasts sincere feelings of astonishment and resentment; in some a feeling of jealousy that those they had, as the habit of a lifetime, regarded as beneath them should, in some respects, be promoted over their heads; in some, blind to the higher aspects of the art and capable only of fixing their gaze on its obvious imperfections, a regrettable spirit of uncharitable hostility. It is from persons belonging to these categories that come those attacks upon the actor and his art which break out periodically, and which, if they reflected public opinion, might seriously distract the actor in the midst of his fancied security in public esteem. Fortunately, these attacks are matters of supreme indifference to the public for reasons I have already indicated, and that is why they meet with no considerable response from the actors themselves. A newspaper, in reviewing a work of this kind, remarked with some asperity that actors were notoriously indifferent to attacks on their profession. But I think the reason for this indifference should provoke, on the part of those who make these attacks, a reconsideration of the wisdom of their course rather than resentment at the actor's silence. The actor is indifferent to such attacks merely because the public, his masters, are indifferent to them. They form their own judgment of actors both in their public and private capacities; they are shrewd enough to exercise their own discretion in the distribution of their favours, and the actor will only be alarmed for the decline of his prestige when he finds his art sunk and degraded in the estimation of his honest fellow-countrymen.

One other topic suggests itself with regard to the changes that have occurred in the relative status of the actor.

The resentment felt by some at his advance in public esteem, or a spirit of blind conservatism that believes that the actor finds his best intellectual development in tavern bars or billiard saloons, is responsible for a sneer occasionally levelled at our modern stage which is as unjust as it is illogical. We sometimes come across the complaint, not only outside but inside our calling, that the art of acting is steadily deteriorating, because the stage is being nowadays invaded by a number of well-born, well-bred, or well-educated young men and women, who are represented as being totally ignorant of their business, and apparently incapable of ever learning it. Now if the art of acting is nowadays really in a state of deterioration (a question open to argument), it is, I venture to think, in the highest degree fallacious to represent such deterioration as in any way due to the influx into our calling of well-bred or well-educated recruits. Of course the genius for acting is, as any other form of artistic genius, conferred upon persons, irrespective of their rank or education, of whether they come from the palace or the plough, the board school or the university; and with such persons we have no concern; they may be trusted to look after themselves. But if the ordinary level of acting appears to be in a depressed condition that condition is due to the fact that our modern actors lack the opportunities for acquiring training and experience that were enjoyed by our predecessors, and not to the fact that they now number among them a greater percentage of well-educated men. It is, on the other hand, difficult to believe that any profession or calling or art does not indirectly benefit, in the general level of its excellence, by being pursued by well-educated men and women, and that that of the actor will not appreciably suffer, but will rather gain in some respects, by numbering among its exponents men and women who enjoy such advantages as a good education confers on any reasonable being. Birth and breeding and education will

not make great actors, but they will not mar them. To the many who are not great they will not take the place of training and experience, but they will enable them to satisfy the demands of those who expect to see accurately represented on the stage every side of our social life, and who believe that the stage, to fulfil that purpose, should draw its exponents from all classes of the community. As the prejudice against the theatre diminishes in intensity, the calling of the actor will be necessarily open to classes by whom it had been hitherto severely neglected. If this stock of new blood does not materially add to our stock of great actors, in other respects it will, I believe, be of indirect benefit to our art.

We must not, however, forget that, according to some, the performance of the actor is hardly to be dignified by the name of an art, or, if it is, it is an art so paltry and unintellectual as wholly unworthy to be ranked with its sisters. The actor is usually subjected to destructive criticism in his dual capacity of artist and man. As an artist he is said to be the exponent of a form of mimicry little raised above that practised by the ape, unworthy to be dignified by the name of art, demanding, as it does, no exercise of study or intelligence; as a man, he is said to be so corrupted by the inherent immorality of his calling and the vanity fostered in him by excessive adulation that he is unfitted to hold social intercourse with respectable or intellectual people. If this view of the conduct and capacity of the actor can be successfully established and generally accepted as the true one, it is obvious that he will sink to a level in the social scale only slightly above that occupied by the common hangman, without, however, the excuse enjoyed by the latter artist that, in pursuing his ignoble calling, he is conferring a practical service on the community. Indeed, from the extremely unamiable tone adopted by some recent critics in their strictures on the unfortunate actor, one would be

inclined to infer that if these gentlemen were obliged to strike a balance between the respective claims of the great actor Betterton and his famous contemporary, John Ketch, to the respectful esteem of posterity, they would pronounce unhesitatingly in favour of the latter.

But to pass to more serious criticism, criticism that is not conspicuously wanting in that "sweetness and light" which should be the first attribute of all such controversy, there are one or two points raised by those who represent the art of acting as an inferior and unworthy art that claim passing consideration. It is true that Leigh Hunt pronounced all such attempts to degrade the actor's art as unworthy of argument; and so for the most part they may be. At the same time, by discussing some of them in a general way, one may arrive at certain truths with regard to that art, truths which at the present time, when, in the opinion of many, the art of acting has lost something of that distinct prominence which it enjoyed a hundred years ago, may serve to remind us of its higher aspects and possibilities, and stimulate those who are sincerely anxious that it should not decline from its glorious past.

If the art of acting is to look for its credentials to our admiration and respect, to the judgment of the world's great critics of art, it finds arrayed on its side a wealth of powerful testimony that is too frequently entirely ignored by modern writers in dealing with this question. At the hands of his detractors, from Mr. Augustine Birrell downward, the actor finds himself confronted at the outset with lines penned by Shakespeare and Macready in those moments of passing disappointment or depression that are the almost inseparable accompaniments of the artistic temperament, and is told that his art is irrevocably condemned out of the mouths of its greatest exponents. But the reverse side of the picture is seldom presented to him. He is not reminded that, in the words of Shakespeare's latest and best biographer, such self-pity as the poet

expresses in the *Sonnets* on account of his pursuit of the actor's calling is, if literally interpreted, the reflection of an evanescent mood, that his interest in all that touched the efficiency of his profession was permanently active, and that he loyally and uninterruptedly pursued that profession until he had resigned all connection with the theatre; nor do we find invoked against the grumblings of Macready his definition of the art of acting which, if somewhat turgid in expression, is none the less dignified and inspiring. Are we, in similar fashion, to condemn the profession of the advocate because Mr. Birrell, K.C., in his essay on "Actors," writes that Macready—these are his actual words—"was always regretting—heaven help him!—that he wasn't a barrister-at-law?" Should we not rather decide that Mr. Birrell's mournful exclamation springs from a painful but evanescent recollection of early brieflessness rather than from an enduring contempt for the profession he adorns? In the same spirit are an actor's momentary expressions of a passing discontent with his lot, such as are to be found in most autobiographical records, to stand against the considered judgments of Goethe and Schiller, Voltaire and Lessing, Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt, George Eliot and George Henry Lewes? all pronouncing in favour of the beauty and dignity of an art "which Horace did not think it beneath his genius to advise, Addison to recommend, and Voltaire to practise as well as to protect." If the value of an art is to be decided by the impression it makes in its more perfected form on the highest intellects of its time—and it is perhaps difficult to find a more satisfactory criterion for ordinary men—then the art of acting comes to us stamped with the respect of genius, confided to our care by illustrious men as a product of the imagination and intellect of mankind that is to be encouraged and esteemed, not belittled and derided.

The commonest fallacy, cherished by many in regard to

the actor's art, is that it is the art of the mimic and nothing more, an art of sedulous imitation, offering no scope to originality or independent, intellectual exertion. A rough-and-ready answer to this common assertion is contained in the fact that good mimics are as a rule notoriously bad actors, and that obviously the sedulous imitation of actual men and women in the circumstances of our daily life can afford an actor little help in the portrayal of such creations of imaginative genius as Hamlet or Othello. That the art of acting had its origin, in common with the pictorial arts, in an imitation of nature, is possible and probable; that it soon passed from mere imitation to representation is certain; and therefore equally certain is it to my mind that, as a result of that transition, the actor is called upon, in common with other representative artists, to reproduce in idealised form that branch of nature—man—which is his especial study. As one great critic has tersely expressed it, "neither the poet nor the actor pretends closely to copy nature, but only to represent nature sublimated into the ideal," and it is this process of idealism that the actor must apply to every character he undertakes to portray, no matter how nearly that character may seem to approach to everyday reality, if he would present it conformably to those rules of correct and beautiful expression that are as imperative in the art of the theatre as they are in the arts that express themselves on canvas or in marble. The carrying out of this process calls on him for gifts of insight and imagination similar to those we look for in any other form of artist; and as insight and imagination of the highest order are employed in the creation by the poet of such transcendent beings as Hamlet or Lear, so in translating such beings into action, in putting them before the spectator as creatures of flesh and blood, insight and imagination of a high order will alone enable the actor to achieve that "union of grandeur without pomp, and nature without

triviality," that supreme idealisation of man in action as we see him about us, which is the fitting and worthy complement of the art of the dramatic poet. Without in any way detracting from the share of the dramatist in the productions of the theatre, it must, I think, be admitted by any one who takes the trouble to consider the question from an enlightened standpoint, that the actor is not the mere parrot-like reciter of the words of the playwright, that the higher the dramatist soars the greater is his need of some kind of intellectual response on the part of his actors, and that instead of setting up actor and author as rivals who are perpetually endeavouring to extend their frontiers at each other's expense, they should be regarded as equal participators in the highest achievements of the theatre.

The answer of G. H. Lewes to the question propounded by Diderot in his famous *Parodoxe*, How far does or should the actor really feel the passion he expresses? is not only interesting as a correct solution of a rather simple problem that has given rise to a good deal of ignorant and thoughtless comment, but shows us very clearly the point in his art where the actor is called upon to exercise a faculty for intelligent selection similar to that demanded from any other artist. "As in all art," writes Lewes, "feeling lies at the root, but the foliage and flowers, though deriving their sap from emotion, derive their form and structure from the intellect." Poet and actor must be capable of feeling the emotions they translate into word or action, but must be so far masters of themselves as to be able to select from their emotions those elements that will serve as materials for their art. "The sudden flash of suggestion which is called inspiration may be valuable, it may be worthless; the artistic intellect estimates the value, and accepts or rejects it accordingly." Passion and reflection are the two elements that, happily combined, compose great acting; for passion alone pro-

duces disordered results, reflection alone a cold and unreal imitation. If the combination be a rare one, that is a cause for constant regret; we may lament the absence of worthy exponents of an art to our heart's content; but we must not allow the absence of great acting to blind us to the fact that acting is a great art; those who deplore our modern acting, and call for its reform, too often forfeit our attention and respect by telling us at the same time that our art is contemptible and an unworthy employment for an intellectual man. Such criticism can only have the effect of placing the modern actor, who seeks to improve and develop his art, on the horns of a dilemma, from which, however, a moderate exercise of reason and common sense may successfully extricate him.

Another common objection urged against the claims of the actor's art to occupy a place by the side of other arts, is that the actor's is an art for which no special training is required, his calling one into which anybody can enter and, no matter how inferior his attainments, find immediate employment. But the same might be said of the art of literature, or the art of oratory. All those arts which have not, like music and painting, a visible technique written, so to speak, across their faces, which operates as an immediate deterrent to thoughtless aspirants, are liable to reckless invasion at the hands of people whose desires and ambitions are hopelessly in excess of their gifts. To write or to speak or to act seem uncommonly easy to a number of over-confident persons; some of these are content with merely regarding the art from a disrespectful distance, and nursing an obstinate conviction that they could easily practise it if they only took the trouble to try; others do try, and in course of time go to swell the melancholy army of those who have mistaken their vocations in life. But because bad literature, bad oratory, and bad acting are, like the poor, always with us, and there are probably few here who at various times in their

armchair, at church, or in the theatre, have not suffered distress at the hands of incompetence in one or all of these forms, are we to deny that writing or speaking or acting, if thoughtfully, instead of thoughtlessly practised, reveal their rules of form and expression to those who cultivate them seriously, and demand the same lifelong adherence on the part of those who follow them in the hope of attaining to some measure of perfection, as the arts whose preliminaries are more obviously technical?

At the same time it would be idle to deny that, of all artistic callings, that of the actor offers most temptation to loafers and those who have failed in almost every other capacity in life. The term "actor" is a wide one, and covers a multitude of persons who would no doubt frankly confess that their presence on the stage was not due to any desire to pursue acting as an art. For purposes of legislation, and in everyday talk, all kinds of stage representation, each excellent in its way, are lumped together, and the exponents of these various forms of entertainment, in some of which the art of acting plays a comparatively subordinate part, are grouped together generically as actors and actresses. And thus it is that persons who have never acted in their lives, whose association with the theatre has been dumb and fleeting, do not hesitate to satisfy, when occasion demands, the exigencies of their country's justice by describing themselves on charge sheets and other legal documents of a melancholy character as actors and actresses. No calling is so rich in sutlers and camp-followers, because no calling is so easy to enter in some capacity or other, no term is so loosely employed as that of actor, and no calling offers to the outsider such seeming allurements to decoy the ignorant and unwary. We all of us have known, in some form or other, the glamour of the theatre to those who sit in front of the curtain. How many really well-informed persons find it difficult to believe that acting is not "such fun,"

and the whole business nothing but one long round of applause and suppers. There are four prime fallacies that I have found to be constantly entertained by intelligent ladies and gentlemen with regard to the work of the actor; they are: firstly, that he is surrounded in the theatre by a large staff of intelligent and willing attendants whose nightly duty it is to dress him and make up his face for him; secondly, that, in his performance, he speaks the author's words or not, as his fancy may dictate; thirdly, that, during the run of a piece he can accept an invitation to dinner by merely mentioning to his manager his intention of absenting himself on that particular evening, when his understudy will, as a matter of course, take his place; and, fourthly, that the evening's performance invariably terminates with a delightful supper served in the green-room, to which all the actors and actresses concerned in the piece are bidden. Let me assure you that not one of these delightful suppositions has the least foundation in fact, and that I have only cited them as instances of the illusions cherished by rational persons as to the actual conditions of the actor's calling. Further, they will explain those attractions that the theatre offers to lazy, thoughtless, vain, or indolent persons, who find their way behind the curtain, not because they wish to take the first step in pursuing an art for which they feel a genuine love, and in which they have some reason to hope that they may, by hard work, ultimately enjoy some measure of success, but because they look forward to being highly paid for doing little, much applauded for making fools of themselves, and constantly supplied with opportunities for dissipation and indulgence of every kind.

Illusions of this kind will be cherished in regard to the business of the theatre as long as the theatre exists; they spring from the nature of things, from the glamour that surrounds the actual representation of a play; from the ignorance of ordinary persons as to the real conditions of

such representation. What is more, they are the groundwork of those reckless and uncharitable charges levelled against men and women of the dramatic profession by unblushing Pharisees who would hold up their hands in horror if you asked them to enter a theatre, but who yet continue to unsparingly denounce the sins and follies of actors and actresses. These teachers and preachers who, I am sorry to say, number among them more than one religious minister of respectable eminence, seem to forget, in their fervid zeal, that there is no sin more ugly and unchristian than want of charity, no proceeding more dishonest than to accuse without investigation and to judge without evidence. If such persons are honestly bent on correcting what they believe to be the evils that corrupt the theatre, let them adopt the same methods for reforming the theatre they would apply to Ratcliffe Highway, or to the conversion of African savages; let them come amongst us, let them manfully face the perils and dangers of the dark continent that lies behind the curtain, let them watch in its actual working the life of the theatre, let them satisfy themselves by personal investigation of the evils they denounce; then, having reformed their methods of arriving at a judgment, they may, if there be need, reform us; then we may, if we require the lesson, learn to be true to our profession, when they have shown themselves true to theirs; but unchristian anathema from those who profess themselves followers of Christ will not convince the simplest sinner of the error of his ways. It was not a teacher of this kind who reformed the publican.

Speaking from my own experience, I would assure those who are honestly anxious to see the calling of an actor as it really is, that it is one in which a great deal of hard, and at times, tiresome work has to be done, that its advantages and its drawbacks are like those of any other profession, equally divided; that success in it is generally proportionate to merit; that it has its trials and tempta-

tions—and what profession has not trials and temptations peculiar to itself?—that it is a calling very varied in its many forms of expression, some less dignified and intellectual than others, but that if we regard its highest examples, the examples of a Garrick or a Kean, as in judging the real service of painting or poetry we should regard the examples of Raphael and Milton as distinct from those of the pot-boiler or the ballad-monger, it is worthy to rank by the side of arts that rely on the intellect or the imagination of man for their supreme manifestation. Let men once free their minds from the wealth of illusion and misrepresentation that hangs round the glittering achievements of the theatre, and they will come to regard the actor not as a kind of meretricious bogey, but as in reality an ordinary worker in the field of art, neither better nor worse than his fellows; then, and not till then, will they arrive at a juster and kindlier estimate of the actor's work, and save themselves the ineffectual labour of trying to bring into contempt an art that has too long ministered to the higher pleasure of mankind to be uprooted from their affection and esteem by an ill-natured catalogue of the weaknesses of its exponents and the trivial side of its practice. The critic who would obscure the intellectual importance of an art, the real essence of its genius, by the slighting enumeration of such accidents in its practice as that the actor paints his face and shaves his chin, or by misrepresenting him as a slavish mimic or an insincere mountebank, such a critic merely confounds the accidents of an art with its essence, its rude origin with the perfected form to which the progress of the human intellect has brought it.

I have said that the actor is open to disparagement, and receives it sometimes in the heartiest fashion both as an artist and a man. We have dealt with him in his former capacity; what are we to say of him in the latter? What has the actor done as a man to deserve the re-

probation that we find some writers now and then so cordially bestowing on him? After careful examination I find that the gravamen of the charge, the real cause that agitates and distresses certain persons, is the extraordinary publicity and adulation of which the actor is made the object, publicity and adulation which, in their opinion, he would not receive if his own vanity and love of praise did not imperatively demand it. The actor is represented as craving for and living upon puffs and paragraphs, miserable if his most trivial doings escape the notice of a reporter, elated if he find himself the hero of some absurd adventure or puerile controversy. Whatever the real causes of this exaggerated importance that is said to be attached to the actor and his doings, and however unfair to the actor the inferences that may be drawn from it, it is, I think, undeniable that we frequently read very foolish things written about actors, and sometimes very foolish words spoken by actors and actresses in the course of interviews; it would be idle to pretend that the members of the dramatic profession have never supplied food for laughter and ridicule by absurd examples of disordered vanity or exaggerated self-importance. But the broad question which underlies these manifestations of human weakness, and is raised by the criticisms they provoke, is the simple one of cause and effect. Are these paragraphs and these interviews concerning the actor that are prominent in almost any newspaper we may choose to open, caused by his insatiate craving for publicity, or are they printed and published by the newspapers themselves in response to public curiosity which, penetrating as it does by means of journalism into the privacy of any class of public character, finds most gratification and amusement in invading the seclusion of the actor? I do not think that anybody who regards the question from the standpoint of the general conditions of our modern life, can be in any doubt as to the true answer to be given. Are our

newspapers, in giving so much space in their columns to actors and their affairs, making themselves the agreeable slaves of the actor's vanity, or are they acting as judicious caterers for the entertainment of the public? Are they obliging or businesslike? Without in any way detracting from the genial benevolence of the journalist, I think we may fairly say that considerations of business are as paramount in journalism as in any other form of public enterprise, and that if the journalist pays great attention to the actor it is because it profits him to do so, because thereby he is responding to a public demand. Indeed so urgent is this demand, so paramount in the public mind is the interest in the fortunes of actors, that the journalist is on occasions obliged to forego considerations of good feeling and good taste in his anxiety to make a paragraph to catch the eye of the general reader as he hastily glances over the columns of his newspaper. For it can only be the all-important motive of arresting at all cost the attention of a reader that induces even the best class of newspaper to invariably head in large type, with a conspicuous reference to their calling, the most trivial errors or misfortunes of an actor or actress, and that in a fashion that is not extended to other callings or professions. The only possible justification for this miserable privilege accorded to members, or so-called members, of the dramatic profession is that paltry wrong-doing or sordid misfortune acquires for the ordinary reader a peculiar interest if it be associated, however remotely, with an actor or actress. But as it would be grossly unfair to attribute the glaring headlines of our daily papers in these unfortunate circumstances to envy or uncharitableness on the part of the journalist towards the actor, so is it equally unfair to entirely attribute to the actor's greedy vanity and self-importance the interviews and paragraphs that are usually extorted from him to gratify a genuine thirst on the part of the public for

information relating to the most generally popular of all their servants.

"There is no class of society," wrote Hazlitt nearly a hundred years ago, "whom so many persons regard with affection as actors," and it was the same critic who declared that the public felt more respect for John Kemble in a plain coat than the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack. What was true then is equally true now, and to withstand or endeavour to correct the affection with which a great mass of people regard the theatre and its artists, is to beat one's head against the proverbial brick wall. There are many and obvious reasons for this affection; the immediate appeal made by the actor in the exercise of his art to the imaginations of the spectators, the fascination that the theatre possesses for persons of all classes, the inevitable interest that an audience feels in a man whom they see constantly placed in situations that directly appeal either to their sense of beauty or to their emotions, the feeling of gratitude that we all experience towards an artist who delights us, which is quite irrespective of our shilling paid at the turnstile or the bookstall, or the gallery door. That the affection and interest aroused by these circumstances should be accompanied by a certain amount of silly and thoughtless adulation and prying curiosity is only to be expected from human nature. However worthy and justifiable may be great outbursts of popular enthusiasm, when are they not marred by much that is foolish and excessive? In a lesser degree the public admiration for and interest in the actor will always exhibit a ridiculous side and an unpleasant side. In the one respect it will show itself by the excessive worship in an actor or an actress of qualities that are not, strictly speaking, intellectual, in the other by a great deal of wanton and mischievous gossip about the private lives of popular favourites. But for all that the affection of the public for its actors has in it little of which either

party need be ashamed; it is sincere, it is natural, it springs from no unworthy cause, and it is but a fair compensation for the comparative oblivion into which the achievements of histrionic genius must ultimately sink. To resent and seek to destroy it is not only a futile labour but a niggardly and an ungracious one. Far be it from me to deny that actors and public not unfrequently make fools of themselves; so do judges and bishops and statesmen, even, in these days of journalistic temptation; but the follies of men are not to be made the measure of the fitting place of their work or employment in the scheme of things, be they judges or bishops or statesmen or actors.

There is one other topic dwelt on with some asperity by opponents of the theatre with which I will deal as briefly as it deserves. I mean the topic of the morals of the theatre. The public discussion of the mean level of morality in any profession, if pushed to inquisitorial lengths, is a highly undesirable proceeding. I would only suggest a few considerations which should be preliminary to any investigation of this kind in relation to the theatre. In the first place, it is commonly believed by persons who have never entered a theatre, or at least passed behind the curtain, that the tender emotions and sentiments portrayed by actors and actresses towards each other in the course of a play seldom stop short on the fall of the curtain. The words of Molé, the French actor, are sufficient answer to that; he writes: "I am dissatisfied with myself this evening; I let myself go too much, I was not master of myself; I was the character itself, not the actor playing it." The actor or actress worthy of the name are not the slaves but the masters of the emotions they portray. As Voltaire pointed out there is, or should be, no greater moral danger to the dramatic artist who portrays the passions of the human heart, than to the painter or sculptor who paints or models from the nude.

Unless we are sunk in the depths of Pharisaical prejudice and deliberate ignorance, we shall resent the moral shortcomings that we may meet with in the accredited biographies of our great actors and actresses, in the same degree as we should resent them in those of poets and musicians. But one word of warning. It is difficult for those who have not personally experienced it, to credit the amount of wanton and utterly unfounded scandal that is spread abroad by tattling and uncharitable persons with regard to the private lives of actors and actresses. Where admiration and interest degenerate into mischievous curiosity, or excite envy in inferior minds, there will be found the source of many a lying tale or reckless invention about those whom the theatre brings prominently before the public. But this is a truth little realised, by many hardly understood. The popular fallacy that the actor lives the character he portrays not only on the stage but in all the relations of everyday life, may seem to many a very foolish and weak-minded one. But we must remember that the audience in a theatre is for the most part composed of persons entirely unfamiliar with the real conditions of theatrical representation, hence—and so far it is as it should be—the illusion of the theatre is to them complete, often unfortunately too complete; with many, from the very nature of the case, this illusion follows the actor or actress after they have quitted the scene; it is difficult to many persons to believe that men and women who have delighted an audience in extraordinary and moving situations, who have represented astonishing and impressive characters, are not at home equally astonishing and impressive, or equally ludicrous or wicked or amorous, according to the nature of the parts they play. It is this afterglow of illusion that survives the fall of the curtain, which tempts people to pry into the actor's private concerns, and greedily swallow any fantastic story that may suit their preconceived notions

of what his private life should be, which is at the root of the many improbable stories and far-fetched inventions about themselves that an actor or actress is occasionally privileged to enjoy, and which makes it difficult for an ordinary spectator to believe that the morals of theatres are not as eccentric and disordered as those of the morally eccentric or disordered persons actors and actresses are not unfrequently called on to portray. How difficult to many to believe that the man who is a charming representative of the gay Lothario is not similarly employed during the greater part of the daytime, or that the representative of a brutal villain is not continually engaged in rehearsing his brutality on his wife and children! I could repeat instances of such unfounded scandal *ad nauseam*; some of them so monstrous as to be incredible but for one's personal experience of them. How they arise and are disseminated is a mystery; but why they arise and spread rapidly abroad is clear enough. Can the ambitious youth who seeks social distinction in middle-class drawing-rooms or at suburban dinner-tables better attract the attention of his hearers and exalt his own reputation as a knowing and popular man about town, than by retailing some choice bit of gossip about a popular actor or actress? I believe there is no better receipt. As some people believe anything they see in print, so many will believe anything they hear of an actor or actress they have seen on the stage. Although this readiness on the part of many persons to swallow unreal stories of men and women whom they have seen in unreal situations, springs from the conditions of the theatre, no man or woman of ordinary courage is likely to be deterred from pursuing the art of acting because, if they are in any degree successful, all sorts of pranks will be played with their private and domestic concerns. At the same time the morals of a calling are not to be judged by the irresponsible gossip that from its very conditions it is bound to excite. We would not judge

the morals of princes from the pages of a scandalous chronicle, or those of judges and barristers from the gossip of a circuit mess-room; on the same principle we must not judge the morals of actors and actresses from the tattle of clubs and drawing-rooms. I would not assert the impeccability of my own calling any more than I would assert the impeccability of those other classes or professions whose private lives are not public property in the sense that ours are, but I would regard with peculiar mistrust stories about any body of men and women that, like those of the dramatic profession, are so entirely at the mercy of malicious or thoughtless gossip, and I would, for the reasons I have given, emphatically warn those who hear scandal relating to the private lives of actors or actresses that, of all gossip and all scandal, that which hangs round the theatre is the most untrustworthy, that it is to a great extent the outcome of an illusion which, if natural and excusable, is none the less inconvenient, and that it is very liable to reckless dissemination because of the peculiar, sometimes unfortunately exaggerated interest of the public in the affairs of its victims. One statement recently made with regard to the moral aspect of the theatrical art was to the effect that purity in a woman was a serious drawback to success as an actress—a specious and invidious statement, but one, I think, not very difficult to refute. It really comes to this: as in literature, so in the theatre, a woman who has been a wife and a mother is more likely to be successful in dealing with human passions and emotions than a nun. At the same time, if acting gains so much from the actual experiences of passion, how is it that men, whose opportunities of cultivating their passions are so much more varied and extensive than those of women, do not surpass in any extraordinary degree the other sex in the delineation of those emotions that are supposed to depend on actual experience for their true expression? The history of the stage has shown that

they certainly do not. M. Coquelin's cadet's jesting repudiation of the virgin actress has no deeper or more unpleasant signification in regard to the efforts of a young girl to achieve success as an actress than it would have in regard to similar attempts in art or literature.

I am afraid I have dealt very incompletely with what is, all said and done, a very extensive and not altogether unimportant subject. I have left untouched many topics suggested by the present conditions of our modern stage, for I have been rather concerned in endeavouring to dissipate certain fallacies that cling round the questions of the status of the actor's art and the general worthiness of his calling; of the present state of that art, of its advance in some directions, its retrogression in others, of its hopes and prospects in the future I have not spoken; there are others better fitted to do so than myself. But I hope that any actor, however humble his position or modest his achievement, has the right to uphold the dignity of the art which he pursues. There is no question that, though greatly diminished in extent and power of recent years, there still exists a feeling of hostility on the part of certain classes of men against the art and calling of the actor. Though these feelings are, no doubt, shared to some extent, even by a certain number of men of intellectual distinction, I believe them to be, for the most part, the outcome of ignorance of the real nature of the art and the real conditions of the calling. The best proof, to my mind, that they are not rooted in truth and justice is the fact that the numbers of those who hold them are steadily decreasing, and that the position of the actor has been advanced in this country to a higher level than in any other country in the world.

Colley Cibber's "Apology"

COLLEY CIBBER'S *APOLOGY*[1]

A WRITER in the *St. James's Gazette* has said that if a conspiracy of silence could be arranged by which the theatrical world—players, play-makers, and play-critics—were, like the good little boy, seen and not heard of for a while, the rest of humanity would gain immeasurably, while the stage and the drama would certainly not lose. Indeed, it seems almost impossible to open any newspaper or review without lighting on criticisms, reflections, strictures—mostly strictures—on the condition of the drama, the poverty of our dramatists, the unfitness of our actors, the vulgarity of the public taste. Wise and unwise utterances, some earnest and impartial, some bearing all the marks of spleen and disappointment, meet one at every turn, all proceeding from those advisers, professional and unprofessional, who, ever since the theatre began to have a history, have been gathered round the bed of the sick drama, which, however, in spite of the many remedies that are being perpetually administered to it, continues to live after its own fashion, really far less hindered than might be supposed by the attentions showered upon it by well-meaning outsiders. The extraordinary and in no way diminishing hold that the theatre has ever had on the popular imagination—an overflowing measure of popularity which is the lasting despair of its enemies and detractors—will always expose it to a great deal of what

[1] Read before the members of the O. P. Club, April 24th, 1904, and reprinted from *The Nineteenth Century*.

one cannot at times help feeling to be rather unnecessary interference from promiscuous persons, eager to catch the public ear by dealing with a topic irresistibly attractive to the general run of mankind. Such interference must be patiently endured as springing from the nature of things. At the same time, it seems to me that it would be wiser, more dignified, in those whose business in life it is to write for, or to act on the stage, to refrain from taking part in discussions of this kind; their work will speak for them with far greater eloquence than their words; and if they have complaints to make about the present conditions under which they are called upon to do their work, let them set about remedying these ills from within, by deeds, not words, by practical assistance instead of the public airing of grievances that may interest and amuse the public but will never become to them matters of real concern.

I am going to ask you to lend your consideration for a short space to a book—little known, indeed, to the ordinary reader, little known, I have no doubt, at the present day to many actors, authors, and critics; a work not only highly edifying and instructive to those interested in the theatre, but one of the most brilliant and entertaining autobiographies in our language; a book that Dean Swift found it impossible to lay down, that Horace Walpole declared to be "inimitable," and that is to-day as fresh, as true, and as pungent in many of its reflections and suggestions as it was in its author's day.

The man who wrote this book—this *Apology for his Life*, as he called it—may be accounted, if not one of the great figures in the history of our actors, at least one of the most conspicuous; the most lively, irrepressible, and good-humoured of those who as actor, author, and manager have served the theatre. For over forty of the eighty-six years of his life Colley Cibber was a busy actor; for more than twenty of these years a successful manager; and

during that time the author of some thirty comedies, tragedies, farces, adaptations, and personal interludes, all more or less successful: he was, moreover, for the last twenty-seven years of his life, one of the worst of our many indifferent Poets Laureate—a record which for activity, for quantity, if not quality of work, may stand alongside with those of Shakespeare and Garrick. Pert, foppish, vain and affected, loving the society of persons of quality, light in his morals, Colley Cibber was at the same time an honest, hard-working actor, proud of his calling, conscious of the abuses to which the theatre of his day was subject, and doing his best, when occasion offered, to mend them: a straightforward and fair-dealing manager, a shrewd and sensible man of the world, a good-humoured but dangerous adversary, as Pope and Fielding found to their cost; above all, not a dull man, as Pope, goaded to madness by the merited, if indecorous, retort that Cibber made to the poet's insult, would have had posterity believe when he deposed Theobald to make Cibber the hero of *The Dunciad*.

Of Cibber's dramatic works not one, if we except his adaptation of *Richard III.*, now rarely played, holds the stage in the present day. His comedies were written to please the taste of his time, and often to furnish himself with the kind of parts in which the public delighted to see him: these were light, comic characters, chiefly of the order of fops, "coxcombs and men of fashion," old and young. In his playing of these parts, in dress, deportment, and manner, he was a model to the beaux of his day. He would have loved to have been accepted as a tragedian, in spite of his weak voice and insignificant appearance; but he was wise enough to recognise wherein his real excellence lay, and when he did essay tragedy, to content himself with such characters as Richard III. and Iago, in which there was less call for harmony of voice and majesty of bearing than in the Hamlets and Othellos. A

further reason he gives us for his choice of these parts—and his reasons in this instance smack somewhat of excuses—is that your villains are generally "better written, thicker sown with sensible reflections, and come so much nearer to common life and nature than characters of admiration, as vice is more the practice of mankind than virtue." Be this as it may, there seems little doubt that Justice Shallow, in which he would appear to have been inimitable, and not Iago or Richard, would have been Shakespeare's measure of Cibber's quality as a player.

As a poet, and as laureate, Cibber was the laughing-stock of his contemporaries: it pleased his vanity to think his odes superior to those of Pindar, but it is hardly too much to say that, in the twenty-seven years during which he composed lyrics, he did not write one good line. In literature he lives by his *Apology*, and by his *Apology* alone. Though its style is often incorrect and affected, and he makes at times curiously simple blunders, it has, what no style is of any value if it lack, character. The reader will find in its pages no little wit, no little knowledge of human nature, the ripe experience of a life spent in humouring successfully the whims and tempers of artistic colleagues, quaint and happy turns of expression, much lively description, a good deal of self-revelation, and the healthy, active spirit of the busy, tireless man to whom Horace Walpole, on meeting him when he had already passed his eighty years, exclaimed, "I am glad, sir, to see you looking so well." "Egad, sir," replied the veteran, "at eighty-four it is well for a man that he can look at all."

Cibber went on the stage in the year 1690, being then nineteen years of age. His father was a sculptor of some note; his mother belonged to an old Rutlandshire family, her grandfather, Sir Anthony Colley, having ruined himself in the cause of King Charles I. His father had hoped to have made a parson or a soldier of Colley, but, for

various reasons, these plans miscarried, to the secret joy of the son, who had only entered the theatre to be at once possessed with that strange and invincible fascination it exercises alike over the capable and the incapable.

To be an actor instead of a clergyman or a soldier was, in the seventeenth century, no small sacrifice to make in the cause of dramatic art. Cibber sets forth very fairly the advantages and disadvantages of the profession in his own day, and tells one or two anecdotes of the ill repute in which the theatre was then held. He cites a moving tale of a lady of real title whose "female indiscretions had occasioned her family to abandon her." The unfortunate lady, anxious to make an honest penny out of what beauty she had left, wanted to go on the stage. Her family, hearing of this, advised the managers of the theatre not to engage her, and they, unwilling "to make an honourable family their unnecessary enemies," felt constrained to decline her services. Cibber laments over the hard case of the lady, who found herself denied by prejudice the means of earning an honest living. And he is no doubt just in his reflection. At the same time it seems doubtful whether the modern stage is to be congratulated upon the fact that recruits of this kind will in our own day find little difficulty in swelling at any time the ranks of the incompetent.

A more serious instance of the ignominious treatment which actors were liable to suffer is that of Mr. William Smith, a barrister turned actor, a man of high moral character and very popular with people of rank. A gentleman having grossly insulted Smith behind the scenes, was dismissed the court by King James II., who was a great admirer of the actor. The courtly gentleman revenged himself upon the player by having him so soundly hooted at his next appearance that Smith withdrew for a time from the stage. But the actor showed his gratitude to the king by joining his army as a volunteer on the landing of William of Orange.

Certainly Smith's experience, coupled with other stories of the insolence that characterised the attitude of many so-called gentlemen in the playhouse, arouses indignation in the mind of any man; but at the same time we must remember that there were good reasons in 1690 why the stage should be regarded by respectable persons with some disfavour, and actors should find it difficult to uphold their right to common consideration. In the first place, the gross indecency of the plays performed—an indecency which in 1698 inspired Jeremy Collier's extravagant denunciation of the theatre—degraded the actor's occupation; and, in the second place, the familiarity that existed between the actor and his audience seriously diminished the independence of the artist. The very conditions under which he acted, the wings crowded with gentlemen who had the run of the stage-door ("those buzzing mosquitoes who took their stand where they might best elbow the actor and come in for their share of the auditor's attention"), the audience often noisy and intractable—such conditions as these were hardly calculated to inspire respect for the art of the player. Again, the kind of happy family feeling that naturally sprang up between actors and audience when two theatres at most were sufficient for the needs of no doubt a very limited number of playgoers, had its inconveniences. A modest expression coming from the mouth of some admirable artist of more or less doubtful reputation, was apt to provoke "fleers from the witlings of the pit." As a consequence of the sensitiveness provoked by such impertinences, Cibber gives an instance —indeed, an extraordinary instance—of an actress who, conscious that beauty was not her strong point, desired that the warmth of some lines she had to speak emphasising her personal beauty might be abated; but he adds, "in this discretion she was alone; few others were afraid of undeserving the finest things that could be said of them." One actress, a Mrs. Rogers, justly proud of her

virtue, was in the habit of announcing it to the public. In an epilogue to an obscure play in which she acted a part of impregnable chastity, she bespoke the favour of the ladies in the audience by protesting that, in honour of their goodness and virtue, she would dedicate her unblemished life to their example:

> I'll copy you;
> At your own virtue's shrine my vows I'll pay,
> Study to live the character I play.

That in her subsequent career she forgot her vow, only shows how much wiser Mrs. Rogers would have been to have let the subject alone.

If the treatment accorded to the actors in Cibber's day was often familiar and impertinent, that of authors was far worse. Cibber, himself be it remembered, a popular author, complains bitterly of the severity and impatience of the audiences in their reception of a new play. "The vivacity of our modern critics is of late grown so riotous that an unsuccessful author has no more mercy shown him than a notorious cheat in a pillory; every fool, the lowest member of the mob, becomes a wit, and will have a fling at him. They come now to a new play like hounds to a carcase, and are all in a full cry, sometimes for an hour together, before the curtain rises, to throw it amongst them. . . . In a word," he concludes, "this new race of critics seem to me like the lion-whelps in the Tower, who are so boisterously gamesome at their meals, that they dash down the bowls of milk brought for their own breakfast." We must be thankful indeed that to-day the bowls of milk are at least consumed in quiet before the young lions pass judgment on their fare.

Whilst Cibber enumerates those peculiar disadvantages attaching to the calling of an actor in the late years of the seventeenth century, he sets against them certain compensations. Apart from the pleasure derived from the exercise

of an art in which, as he quaintly phrases it, "to excel requires as ample endowments of nature as any one profession (that of holy institution excepted)," he notices the fact that if an actor excel in his profession, he will be received among people of condition with a social distinction to which he would never have attained had he followed the most profitable pursuits of trade; and he cites Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Nance Oldfield, and others as instances of those thus distinguished. Let us suppose, he adds, that these men had been eminent mercers and the women famous milliners, can we imagine that merely as such, though endowed with the same natural understanding, they would have been called into the same honourable parties of conversation in which, he affirms, these actors and actresses were capable of sustaining their part with spirit and variety, though the stage were never the subject of discussion? Cibber here touches very happily on one of the principal causes of the vulgar resentment cherished by the mercers and milliners of different ages against a calling which religious prejudice has taught them to despise, but which they find to their astonishment encouraged and courted by their social superiors—a confusion of ideas that in dull capacities aggravates rather than allays resentment.

He takes, too, an opportunity of administering—almost contemporaneously with Voltaire—a well-deserved rebuke to the Roman Catholic Church for its treatment of actors, which was in his day one of the least charitable and amiable features of that religion. He hits the nail on the head, as Cibber often does, when he remarks that, in many countries where the Papal religion prevails, the holy policy, though it allows not an actor Christian burial, is so conscious of the usefulness of his art, that it will frequently take in the assistance of the theatre to recommend sacred history to the more pathetic regard of the people. How then, he asks, can they refuse an actor Christian burial

when they admit his profession to serve the solemn purposes of religion? How far, he asks, is such inhumanity short of that famous painter's who, to make his crucifix a masterpiece of nature, stabbed the innocent hireling from whose body he drew it, and having heightened the holy portrait with his victim's last agonies of life, sent the picture to serve as the consecrated ornament of an altar? Never was a cruel prejudice more thoroughly and trenchantly exposed. Happily such prejudice is for the most part a thing of the past, and there are now few religious bodies of any denomination that will not gladly accept the gladly-given services of actors and actresses in support of their charitable undertakings.

But, even since Cibber wrote, traces of such prejudice, though in a more obscure form, are to be met with. A recent writer, I believe a Roman Catholic, in a historical monograph on "Robespierre," an admirable and picturesque, if at times histrionic, biography, misses no opportunity of insulting a profession of which he in all probability knows nothing, and allows his prejudice—at least, so it appears—to betray him into the most singular inaccuracy. The violent and eccentric conduct of Tallien, the conventionalist and contemporary of Robespierre, he appears to explain and justify throughout by the fact that he had been a comedian, an actor. I should very much like to know what evidence he can produce that Tallien was ever an actor? Is he not thinking of Collot d'Herbois? And if Tallien were an actor and did flourish a dagger at Robespierre in the Convention, a piece of "actor's foolery," as he describes it, what, pray, of Edmund Burke and the Birmingham dagger he flourished in the House of Commons? If the writer means to imply that Tallien was an actor—and it certainly reads as if he did—then he is incorrect; if he means that his conduct in flourishing a dagger in the Convention, in shedding blood in Bordeaux, in lounging in drawing-rooms and posing as a southern voluptuary was the conduct of

an actor, then he is not only incorrect but unjust and offensive into the bargain.

When the actor has recovered from his astonishment at such gratuitous flouts, Cibber opportunely reminds him that we actors can claim a canonised saint in the Roman Martyrology, one Masculas, master of interludes, put to death by Genseric the Vandal, with great torment and reproach, for confession of the truth; from which and other instances, such as the fact that some ten noted actors took up arms for King Charles I. when the Civil War shut the theatres, Cibber concludes that "that there have been players of worthy principles as to religion, loyalty, and other virtues; and if the major part of them fall under a different character, it is the general unhappiness of mankind that the most are the worst." One would hardly dwell on facts of this kind, were it not for the amazing ignorance that is at the bottom of the dregs of prejudice that still survive against the theatre, and that one sees so egregiously displayed whenever some newspaper, reverting to a topic that always "draws," opens its columns to the lucubrations of the descendants of the dismal Prynne and the intemperate Collier. Colley Cibber should always at such seasons be referred to as a wholesome antidote to the doldrums and megrims of those who can neither find nor permit satisfaction in what he very justly describes as "the most rational scheme that human wit can form to dissipate with innocence the cares of life, to allure even the turbulent or ill-disposed from worse meditations, and to give the leisure hours of business and virtue an instructive recreation."

For twenty years Cibber remained a salaried actor, playing for the most part at Drury Lane under the management of Christopher Rich. He commenced work at a salary of ten shillings a week, which just before he went into management had risen to the then considerable sum of £5 a week. This, with his benefit, brought him in some £162 for the year 1708—1709, the largest sum made

by any actor in the company that year being £259, earned by the popular and industrious Wilks, who added to his playing the duties of stage manager. The story of Cibber's first salary is interesting. Hanging about the wings waiting for employment Master Colley, as he was called by his familiars, was sent on to the stage in the part of a messenger charged to deliver his message to the great actor, Thomas Betterton, perhaps the noblest figure in the recorded annals of our players, a man whose pre-eminent artistic and moral excellence made him in his day the unquestioned leader of his profession and won the respect and admiration of such various beholders as Steele, Pope, and Cibber. If his artistic genius was surpassed by Garrick and Kean, they neither of them could inspire that personal affection and regard that the generous, simple nature of Betterton extorted from his contemporaries. To this commanding actor entered Master Colley with his message, but so appalled was he to find himself in the presence of the great tragedian, that he forgot entirely message and everything. Betterton, annoyed at his confusion, asked his name. "Master Colley!" replied the prompter. "Then forfeit him!" "But," urged the prompter, "he has no salary." "No," replied Betterton, "then put him down ten shillings a week, and forfeit five!" This ten shillings, so pleasantly earned by Cibber, was shortly after raised to twenty on the recommendation of Congreve, the author, and then to thirty shillings on the secession of Betterton and other of Mr. Rich's discontented actors.

It was little wonder that actors who could afford to quarrel soon quitted a theatre of which Mr. Christopher Rich was the chief director. Cibber's sketch of this seventeenth-century manager is one of his happiest. The great art of Mr. Rich as a manager seems to have been to do his actors out of as much of their salary as he conveniently could. He was as sly a tyrant, says Cibber, as ever was at the head of a theatre; for he gave the actors

more liberty and fewer days' pay than any of his predecessors; he would laugh with them over a bottle and bite them in their bargains. He would judge the merit of a leading actor by his ability to keep the other actors quiet when they had gone six weeks without any salary. He was always promising his actors what he was pleased to term "arrears," but in fifteen years Cibber declares he never received more than nine days' of them. The actors in Rich's day were paid by shares of the profits, ten going to the management, ten to the actors; but Rich so contrived it—he had been a lawyer—that "the actors were limited sharers of *loss*, and he the sole proprietor of *profits*." Much criticism is expended on our actor-managers of to-day, but it is only fair to record in their favour that it was not until Cibber, Wilks, and Dogget, three actors, took over Drury Lane in 1710 and entered on their twenty years of successful management, that a theatre was once again honestly and decently administered. It is with justifiable pride that Cibber tells us that, in the twenty years of his management, he never had a creditor that had occasion to come twice for his bill, that every Monday morning discharged us of all demands before we took a shilling for our own use: "we never asked any actor, nor were desired by them, to sign any written agreement whatsoever." As he truly says, "Our being actors ourselves was an advantage to our government, which all former managers who were only idle gentlemen wanted."

Among the many reforms introduced by Cibber was the closing of the stage-door to the idle gentlemen who were accustomed to haunt the wings of the theatre and elbow the actor during his performance; and in this regard he shrewdly touches on the inadvisability of actors making themselves cheap, and allowing the curious to penetrate the mystery that should to some extent shroud the practice of their calling—a mystery which it is, alas! to-day almost impossible to preserve. "In admitting these gentlemen

behind the scenes," says Cibber, "we too often showed them the wrong side of our tapestry, and many a tolerable actor was the less valued when it was known what ordinary stuff he was made of."

Cibber and his colleagues had their share of good fortune. It is not often that the author of a successful play foregoes his fees, yet such was the case with Addison when he presented *Cato*, free of encumbrance, to the managers of Drury Lane. *Cato* was perhaps the greatest triumph of the Cibber management. Its production was the occasion of intense excitement, both in the literary and political world. Pope wrote a prologue for it, Garth an epilogue; Swift came to the rehearsals and, not being accustomed to the ways of rehearsal, was very much astonished to hear the "drab that acts Cato's daughter" stopping in the midst of a passionate part to call out to the prompter, "What's next?" By the term "drab" Swift is describing the brilliant Mrs. Oldfield, from whom, said Horace Walpole, no bad judge, women of the first rank might have learnt behaviour, and whose morality was sufficiently respectable to allow of her interment in Westminster Abbey. Had Swift been versed in the conditions of an art the ignorance of which seems to many a literary critic the highest qualification for depreciating the art itself, he might have known that imperfection at rehearsal is sometimes the privilege of genius and no criterion of the achievement of the first night. It must be indeed a warped or unthinking prejudice that makes Pope incarnate dulness in the person of the lively Cibber, and Swift style the elegant and accomplished Mrs. Oldfield a drab.

But to-day, whatever the fate of our actors, our actresses seem to be in no danger of such rude depreciation as Swift treated them to, in the person of Mrs. Oldfield; no "drabs" from the Dean are likely to affront them; they must rather be on their guard lest they be lured to ruin by the subtle flattery of specious

wooers. Mr. Walkley, the accomplished critic of *The Times*, most subtle and most specious, openly courts their favours at the Royal Institution and the Playgoers' Club; he tells these ladies that, while we actors are something rather less than men, impaired citizens—in the words of Henley, neither masters of our fates nor captains of our souls—like, as I venture to think, the barrister and the novelist, dealers in emotions not our own, states of feeling, portrayals of character not our own ; our actresses, on the other hand, are something more than women ; the practice of their art induces a sublimation of their sex until they pass to something beyond it, whether in the direction of greater masculinity or some more ethereal class of being, whether they put on the wings of angels or develop the thews of men, I have never quite been able to understand. But in any case I would venture to warn these ladies against this apparently artless wooer. Beware this gay and debonair suitor! Beware lest he be merely piping you on to ruin, until when you fall at his feet prostrate with praise, worshipping this unexpected deliverer, he turn upon you, and with the ὑβρις of the young Greek, the *insouciance* of the flippant Gaul, spurn your advances, and show you that, in becoming more than women, you have been transformed into some unattractive and unnatural cross between a Gorgon and a mermaid. I, for my part, mistrust these dulcet attempts to lure our damsels from the fold. We actors must stand together, lest our women be torn from our unmanly arms and handed over to the more virile protection of full citizens, complete masters of their fate, perfect captains of their souls.

The first performance of *Cato* under Cibber's management was wildly successful. Addison, nervous and excited, sat in a box with Berkeley, the philosopher, fortifying his spirits with burgundy and champagne. Political feeling had been stirred by rumours of the play being a covert attack on the Tory Government ; but that seemed only to

make the approval of the audience the more unanimous; for the Whigs applauded vociferously what they considered a Whig play, whilst the Tories applauded no less vociferously to show that it was not. Lord Bolingbroke, then Secretary of State, called Booth, who played Cato, into his box and presented him with fifty guineas for his honest opposition to a perpetual dictator, otherwise the Whig Duke of Marlborough; whereupon the Whigs vowed that they also would get up a subscription of fifty guineas to present to Booth, to show their appreciation of his services to the Whig dramatist, Addison. But history does not relate whether the fortunate tragedian ever received this second dole; he may well have been content with the first. The play on its first production ran for thirty-five nights, an unexempled record in those days. This long run was followed by a visit of the actors to Oxford, and in this connection Cibber sheds a pleasing light on his managerial ways. It had been the custom for the actors when at Oxford to play twice a day, and, as in those days there were no half salaries for matinées, they consequently received double pay. But on this occasion, as the Oxford theatre had been enlarged and the London season so successful, the managers, anxious to keep their players fresh and make the visit pleasant and profitable to the rest of their society, whilst only giving one performance in the day, paid the actors the usual double salary; and they were no losers by their generosity. The visit was both pleasant and profitable; the three performances of *Cato* were witnessed by overflowing audiences. Cibber's criticism of the respective quality of the London and Oxford audience is instructive. "A great deal," he writes, "of that false, flashy wit and forced humour which had been the delight of our metropolitan multitude, was only rated there (at Oxford) at its bare, intrinsic value." Here, he tells us, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson inspired as deep a reverence as the *Ethics* of Aristotle; from which account

we may gather that whilst *Cato* was received with enthusiasm, the up-to-date fashionable London comedies, some of them no doubt Cibber's own, fell rather flat. Such was the Oxford of 1713. In the Oxford of 1904, whilst we have no doubt that Shakespeare and Ben Jonson still inspire the same reverence as the *Ethics* of Aristotle, our only fear is lest that reverence become an awful regard, too solemn to brook the rough intrusion of dramatic representation.

This was a great year, this 1713, to Cibber, Wilks, and Dogget; at the end of the season, when all expenses had been paid, they found themselves the proud possessors of £1,500 apiece. They left Oxford honoured with the thanks of the Vice-Chancellor for the decency and order observed by their company, an honour of which they showed their appreciation by contributing fifty pounds to the repair of St. Mary's church.

Prosperous as were the years of Cibber's management, he did not escape the trials and anxieties inseparable from such a situation. The authors of bad plays were a great thorn in his side; he complains of their persecution, and their indignation against the actors for rejecting the abortive piles of poetry that they sought to twist into the likeness of a play. Who are these actors, the indignant playwrights would exclaim, to judge of their merit? To which Cibber retorts by asking these gentlemen how they can suppose that actors can have risen to any excellence in their calling without feeling or understanding the value of such productions? Would you have reduced them, he asks, to the mere mimicry of parrots and monkeys that can only prate and play tricks without reflection? And he concludes by asking these gentlemen authors the very pertinent question, if neither Dryden nor Congreve, Steele nor Addison complained of the actors' incapacity to judge a play, who will believe that the slights you have met with are undeserved or particular? We can hardly wonder at Cibber's pointed resentment against these gentlemen when

we recall the fact that it was the usual custom of the unsuccessful author of his day to publish his play, after its failure, with a preface in which the actors of it were roundly abused and charged with its want of success. What Cibber says of his own day is equally applicable to the present time. I have often known actors abused by obscure and unsuccessful authors; but it is very rarely that the author of distinction finds fault publicly with his players, even if he have cause. Both author and actor are too well aware that the balance of failure and success will, in the long run, generally hang fairly evenly between the two of them; that they are both working in most cases for a common end, and that recrimination coming from either side is not only undignified and useless, but is bound to be frequently ill-considered and unjust.

Cibber narrates a pleasing anecdote of one of these fine gentlemen, would-be authors, who, on the second night of the performance of his poor play, came swaggering in fine full-bottomed periwig into the lobby of the theatre with a lady of condition on his arm, and called out to the box-keeper to direct him to his seats. "Sir," replied Mr. Trott, the then box-keeper, "we have dismissed the audience, there was not company enough to pay candles!" In which "mortal astonishment," adds Cibber, we may leave the worthy gentleman.

Another source of constant trouble to the assiduous Colley were his partners in management, and of these most especially Mr. Robert Wilks, their leading actor. Wilks, a man of gentle birth holding, before he went on the stage, a post in the office of the Irish Secretary at Dublin, out of which his successor made some £50,000, was an accomplished actor, indefatigable in his passion for work, but of a hasty and difficult temper. When, on the death of Mountford, the famous light comedian, murdered by Lord Mohun, he came to London in the hope of being his successor, he found that place already filled by one

George Powell, son of an actor, himself an able but rough and uncultivated player, of loose life and intemperate habits. The story of the dethroning of Powell by Wilks, who certainly, in the opinion of the critics of the day, had, in comedy, the inestimable advantage over his rival of being able to appear a gentleman, is the old story of the two apprentices. Though Powell had a better voice, a better ear for speaking than Wilks, as excellent and tenacious a memory, and greater assurance, by an unheedful confidence, an over-indulgence in Nantz brandy and perpetual impecuniosity, he was soon outstripped by his industrious competitor, but not before the spectacle of his intemperance had cured Barton Booth (then a young man) of a love of drink which might have robbed the stage of a remarkably fine actor. It is related of poor Powell, that being in constant apprehension of Sheriff's officers, he would walk the streets carrying a sheathed sword in his hand, and if he sighted from afar a bailiff, would call out, "Get on the other side of the way, you dog!" to which the bailiff would politely reply, "We do not want you *now*, Mr. Powell." Such a man could not hope to stand long against the assiduous Mr. Wilks, whose passion for work seems almost unequalled in the history of the stage. Cibber tells us how, on one occasion, Wilks had prevailed on an author to cut out of his part a long and crabbed speech which he found it difficult to master. The author consented, but Wilks, thinking it an indignity to his memory that anything should be considered too hard for it, went home and made himself perfect in the speech, though well knowing it was never to be spoken on the stage. Such perseverance, added to a charming and sympathetic personality, enabled Wilks to follow, though at a distance, in the steps of Betterton. "To beseech gracefully," writes Steele in the *Tatler*, "to approach respectfully, to pity, to mourn, to love, are the places wherein Wilks may be made to shine with the utmost beauty."

Such was Wilks as an actor; but as manager, if we may believe Cibber, he was a perpetual trial to his colleagues. His temper was impossible, his jealousy, like that of many artists, ever wakeful, his greed for parts insatiable. No amount of money could compensate him for a bad part; the great success of the revival of the *Tempest* only disgusted him, because it condemned him to go on playing the indifferent *rôle* of Ferdinand. If he ever gave up one of his parts, it was only to appear magnanimous, and by surrendering it to some raw young actor, to be the more regretted in it. In accordance with such a plan, he, on one occasion, surrendered the part of Macduff, in which he had won enthusiastic praise, to a young recruit to the company, one Charles Williams, contenting himself with what was then considered the less effective part of Macbeth. Booth, his fellow-manager and rival tragedian, was to play Banquo, but, hearing of Wilks's change of characters and suspecting the real motive, he went to Williams and asked him to give him Macduff in exchange for Banquo. Williams readily consented, but no sooner did the news reach Wilks that the experienced Booth and not the inexperienced Williams was to be his successor in Macduff, than he immediately gave up his projected appearance as Macbeth and resumed his old part.

But Cibber gives a yet more amusing instance of the difficult temper of his colleague. Wilks, it appears, was in the habit of constantly complaining that he was overworked—a drudge, in fact; that he needed rest and repose. At length Cibber and Booth, weary of these protestations, determined to try their value. They were about to revive Vanbrugh's comedy of *The Provoked Wife*. Here seemed an excellent opportunity for testing the alleged fatigue of Wilks. After the play, which had been in some degree revised since its original production, had been read to the company, Cibber turned to Wilks. Says Cibber, the part

of Constant in this play being a character of less action than he, Wilks, had generally appeared in, this seemed a fitting occasion for him to ease himself by giving it to another;—here Wilks looked grave—that, as the love scenes, suggested Cibber, were rather serious than gay, the part might sit very well on Booth;—down dropped Wilks's brow, furled were his features—that if, continued Cibber, they were never to revive a play without him, what would they do if he were indisposed?—here Wilks pretended to stir the fire—that for one, urged Cibber, in Wilks's position it was unprofitable trouble to play so unimportant a part. At this point, says Cibber, the pill began to gripe him; Wilks, bursting into a passion, charged his colleagues with a desire to ruin him with the public, and, flinging the part on the table, sat knocking his heel on the floor. Booth, to calm him down, said he quite saw his point; that, after all, acting was the most wholesome exercise in the world—in fact, it always gave him, Booth, a good stomach. At this point Mrs. Oldfield, who was to play the opposite part to Wilks's Constant, began to titter behind her fan. The titter seemed to suggest to Wilks a sudden way out of his embarrassment. He turned to Mrs. Oldfield and said that if she would choose her own Constant, he would readily give it up to whomsoever she might select. Whereupon Mrs. Oldfield jumped to her feet, took Cibber by the shoulder, with her usual frankness called them all a parcel of fools to make such a rout about nothing, and insisted on Wilks sticking to the part. Thus, by help of a woman's ready wit, ended happily a very quaint and amusing scene; but Wilks had been made to see that his fellow-managers understood the proper value of his complaints.

Cibber, in spite of their disagreements and the frequent trouble and offence caused by Wilks's irascible disposition, acknowledges its service as a rod by which to keep in order the hired actors, and prevent slackness and carelessness

entering into the performances. The sharp authority exercised by Wilks on the stage made the dreaming idleness and jolly negligence of rehearsal, which had grown up under Powell's casual supervision, things unknown while Cibber and Wilks were managers of Drury Lane. Even the great Betterton, from his gentle, easy temper, had proved himself incapable of keeping order among his players; so that we may consider Mr. Wilks well worth that extra £50 a year paid him by his colleagues nominally for writing out the playbills, really for keeping order and preserving discipline behind the scenes.

In another of his managerial troubles Cibber touches us very nearly. We are accustomed to think to-day that never was the legitimate drama in so parlous a condition, never did the more serious forms of dramatic entertainment have so hard a struggle for life. To mention only musical comedy, the most powerful rival of the legitimate drama in the affection of the public, here we have a highly delightful species of theatrical fare spread before the public with a skill, a luxury, a distinction that have never before been bestowed on them; artists of the highest quality are engaged in its service; nothing is spared to render it attractive, and ample has been, and is, the reward of those who have lavished so much pains on its adornment. And in addition to this attractive competitor, we have on the one side the opera, now an annual institution; on the other music halls and circuses flourishing in popular favour. Certainly the conditions are difficult, more difficult than ever before; the legitimate drama has to battle bravely to keep its head above the waters of public taste. But, when we read Cibber's *Apology*, we are inclined to ask, Was it not ever thus? Had not the purveyors of the drama pure and simple ever the same contest with the natural tendency of busy men to fly to forms of entertainment that offer a few hours of thoughtless enjoyment, the natural tendency of the crowd to the more frivolous forms

of relaxation? Though the struggle may be more intense now that men lead more rapid, strenuous lives, and consequently require in a greater measure light and mentally restful entertainment, may we not to-day take some consolation from the fact that it is no new struggle we are watching, no peculiar affliction of our own generation, that the successful exponents of serious drama in the past had to fight the same battle, to hold up their heads against the same competing forces, different in style, but similar in kind. Cibber would have us believe such a struggle is as old as the days of Terence, who in one of his prologues reproves the Roman audience of his day for their fondness for the "funambuli," or rope-dancers. It is certainly as old as Horace. With Colley Cibber the wail of the injured manager and dramatist is continuous throughout the pages of the *Apology*, whilst we find Dryden, Pope, Steele, and later Dr. Johnson complaining constantly of the degradation of the drama by the introduction of singers, dancers, puppets, and elephants on a stage that should, in their opinion, be reserved for the productions of pure tragedy and comedy. Cibber reproaches Sir William Davenant with being the first manager to try to combat the success of a rival company of actors more popular than his own by resorting to the production of dramatic operas, and versions of *The Tempest* and *Macbeth* decked out in expensive scenes and habits, and lightened by the efforts of the best singers and dancers; says Cibber, it was little wonder that these frivolous spectacles grew too hard for sense and simple nature, when it is considered how many more people there are that can see and hear than think and judge. Later Betterton is rebuked for having brought over three famous French dancers, "mimics and tumblers," and we find an angry dramatist exclaiming in a prologue:

> Must Shakespeare, Fletcher and laborious Ben
> Be left for Scaramouch and Harlequin?

Anon, Italian opera steals in, in the person of one Valentini, a true and sensible singer, according to Cibber, but "of a throat too weak to sustain those melodious warblings for which the fairer sex have since idolised his successors." Horror upon horror accumulates when Rich, always anxious, as Cibber admits, to please the majority, meditates the introduction on to his stage of a phenomenally large elephant, and is only deterred from the outrage by the bricklayer's assurance that if he takes down any part of the wall to admit the beast, the elephant will assuredly bring down the house. Cheated of his elephant, Rich fell back on some rope-dancers. This was too much for Cibber, then a member of Rich's company. On the first night of the rope-dancers' performance the indignant actor stepped down into the pit, and told those sitting near him that he hoped they would excuse him if he declined any longer to appear on a stage brought so low as it was by that night's disgraceful entertainment; and he tells us the audience took the player's protest in good part, and Rich was obliged shortly after to get rid of his rope-dancers.

From all quarters, it would appear, the actors of the eighteenth century received sympathy in a predicament of this kind. Cibber relates how a nobleman, indignant at the attention an opera was attracting at one of the theatres, told Cibber that it was shameful to take part of the actors' bread from them to support the silly diversion of people of quality. One can hardly help contrasting with the utterance of this nobleman that of the Viscount in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. "What's the good of Shakespeare, Pip?" he asks. "I never read him. What the devil is it all about, Pip? There's a lot of feet in Shakespeare's verse, but there ain't any legs worth mentioning in Shakespeare's plays, are there, Pip? Juliet, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and all the rest of 'em, whatever their names are, might as well have no legs at all, for anything the audience know about it, Pip. . . . I'll tell you what it is. What the

people call dramatic poetry is a collection of sermons. Do I go to the theatre to be lectured? No, Pip. If I wanted that, I'd go to church. What's the legitimate object of the drama, Pip? Human nature. What are legs? Human nature. Then let us have plenty of leg pieces, Pip, and I'll stand by you, my buck!" As to which of these two noblemen are to be regarded as voicing the true sentiments of the majority of their order at the present day towards the relative merits of serious and light entertainments, we cannot pause to determine; we can only express a passing hope that the Viscount has not got it all his own way.

But Nemesis, in the shape of managerial necessity, was to overtake Cibber, and bring him to his knees for his affronts to the singers and dancers. When he had been manager of Drury Lane for some time he found himself obliged, from the accustomed lack of sufficiently good plays, to fight a rival theatre by resorting to these same singers and dancers whom he had roundly censured, and to all the arts and graces of pantomime. *The Loves of Mars and Venus* was the first of these crutches, as he calls them, to which he was driven for support; thence swiftly declining, we find him producing *Harlequin Sorcerer*, in which Harlequin is hatched on the stage from a huge egg, and so incurring the castigation of his enemy, Pope, who, alluding to this entertainment and its scenic triumphs, writes in *The Dunciad*:

> The forests dance, the rivers upward rise,
> Whales sport in woods, and dolphins in the skies;
> And last, to give the whole creation grace,
> Lo! one vast Egg produces human race!

And again:

> But, lo! to dark encounter in mid air
> New wizards rise: here Booth, and Cibber there,
> Booth in his cloudy tabernacle shrin'd,
> On grinning Dragons Cibber mounts the wind.

Cibber was much too shrewd and honest not to be conscious of his guilt in this respect, and confess his error in making use of fooleries he had condemned. And he seeks to excuse himself by drawing a parallel between his own conduct and that of King Henry IV. of France in adopting the Roman Catholic religion to suit the exigencies of his political situation. "I was still in my heart," he writes, "as much on the side of truth and sense as the French King, but with this difference, that I had leave to quit them when they could not support me; for what equivalent could I have found for falling a martyr to them?" And he goes on in a pleasant spirit to justify his vanity in venturing to compare his conduct with that of so great a man as Henry IV. "What I want of the king's grandeur, nature has amply supplied to me in vanity, a pleasure which neither the pertness of wit nor the gravity of wisdom will ever persuade me to part with. . . . Vanity is of all complexions, the growth of every clime and capacity; authors of all ages have had a tincture of it; and yet you read Horace, Montaigne, and Sir William Temple with pleasure. Nor am I sure, if it were curable by precept, that mankind would be mended by it. Could vanity be eradicated from our nature, I am afraid that the reward of most human virtues would not be found in this world. And happy is he who has no greater sin to answer for in the next!"

With this pleasing admission of a fault which, confessed, loses half its mischief, let us leave old Cibber. Over his sketches, brilliant many of them, of his brother actors, over his quarrel with Pope, over the many incidents of his varied, busy life that he narrates with such unfailing spirit, such a humorous appreciation of the realities of things, of the good and ill in human character, I have no time to linger; I can only advise those who read me to turn to the book itself, which will very pleasantly while away a leisure hour. It is a book which must have an abiding interest for

those who are lovers of the theatre. Cibber has something to say to us after two hundred years have gone by, because his book is written from the inside of the theatre, not from without; not by one ignorant of actors, unsympathetic towards their art, but by a successful actor, manager and author, a man who, whatever his faults of character, at least loved and respected his profession, upheld its dignity, reformed its abuses, and paid his way as an honest man; one of the best as he was one of the first of actor-managers. Cibber's *Apology* is the shrewd reply of the practical man of the world to the pedants and theorists who, sitting in their studies, would fain conduct from their desks the business of the theatre. And it is the best reply to those who would have us believe that the actor is a strange, peculiar being, something rather less than a man, but possibly more than a monkey, an impaired, unmanly citizen. Cibber's actors and actresses, as he pictures them for us in his book, are on the whole as good specimens of ordinary men and women as we are likely to meet with in any other society of his day; and they are the same now. There are, of course, and have been, actors and actors, as there are varied specimens of every class; actors, like Betterton, great and worthy men; like Scum Goodman who, in addition to being an actor, was a cheat, a highwayman, a traitor, and a would-be murderer; the Addisons and the Savages, the Johnsons and the Boyces of our calling; but in their essential characteristics no different from other men, neither better nor worse.

When I read these disquisitions on the natural inferiority of the actor as a man, I am irresistibly reminded of Mr. Disraeli's famous speech before the Oxford Diocesan Society on the Darwinian theory of the descent of man, when he asked, "What is the question placed before society with such glib assurance? Is man an ape or an angel? My Lord," he replied, addressing the bishop who presided,

"I am on the side of the angels." When we hear it asked whether the actor is rather less than a man, a damaged specimen of humanity, or whether he is a man and an artist in the ordinary acceptance of the terms, may we not range ourselves on the side of the angels, on the side of such great and glorious men of genius as Goethe and Voltaire, Lessing and Hazlitt, who admired and respected the art of the player, the achievements of the theatre; on the side of those two good archbishops, Bancroft and Tillotson, who admitted actors to their society and enjoyed the friendship of the great players of their day? To deny the full privilege of manhood to the actor, to take from him but one jot or tittle of full citizenship in whatever state he has his place, is, in the words of Mr. Disraeli, foreign to the conscience of humanity, a conclusion that from the strictest intellectual point of view cannot be sustained. The history of the theatre, of the careers of those whose lives have been devoted to its service, furnishes abundant and overwhelming proof, that, if we are to quote Henley's poem in this relation, to live a few hours on the stage in those "knightly years that have gone with the old world to the grave," be it as King in Babylon or Christian slave, does not unsex the player or impair his character; that he is as much the master of his fate, the captain of his soul, as the advocate who pleads for the man he cannot help knowing to be guilty, the journalist who has to sustain a cause against which his inward conviction rebels, or the novelist who throws the full energy of his genius into the creation of some splendid type of human villainy.

The prejudice against the actor is dying, but, like any prejudice that has religion to support it, it is dying hard. A prejudice that can cite pulpit justification for uncharitable conduct is—such is the inconsistency of human nature—strangely hard to kill; any opportunity that a Chadband

can enjoy of looking down on and anathematising one not too obviously his inferior, will be ever welcome to crawling minds. But that such a prejudice is anything but one of those many unsightly masks by which in past ages human weakness has hidden the face of true religion I refuse to believe. And the religion of the future will wonder at those who have shuddered and held up their hands at what Cibber has well described as "the most rational scheme that human wit could form to dissipate with innocence the cares of life," and will consider the man who has devoted his life to such a cause no mean citizen, no unworthy servant to the public good.

Of course, we actors must not look to all men for sympathy, nor expect it from them. As some men of high ability, of refined taste in many things, are deaf to the charms of music, it has no appeal to them, the sense of it is lacking in their natures; so are there men of culture and attainment, men of genius like Rousseau, to whom the art of acting makes no appeal, who have no sympathy with the actor's work. Such men have, no doubt, at different times been called on to write about the theatre, and that they should write with little sympathy is all that we can expect; nor should we resent what we cannot correct. But we have at least the right to ask that such a want of sympathy should be the strongest reason for making any man pause and consider before he proclaims himself to be the constant witness or judge of what, if it be true that to act unmans a man, must be a degrading spectacle, before he even suggests, however ingeniously, against any section of his fellow-men that, in comparison with himself, in comparison with those who watch and enjoy their achievements, they are impaired and unmanly citizens. In all times and ages since the theatre has been established, and never more so than at the present day, the actor, to succeed and hold his own, to encounter the difficulties, the

chances, the, at times, cruel anxieties of his calling, has required, shall I say, a greater mastery of his fate, a higher captaincy of soul, than many another man is called on to exercise whose work is done in more peaceful and secure surroundings; and when I look around on the careers of those who are to-day at the head of my profession, I feel that, whatever the varieties of their artistic achievement, to reach the positions to which they have attained they have had to exercise those same qualities of endurance, pluck, determination and self-control that we look for in all men who have made their mark, in however modest a sphere, on the history of their time.

The Calling of the Actor

THE CALLING OF THE ACTOR

I RECEIVED, not very long ago, in a provincial town, a letter from a young lady, who wished to adopt the stage as a profession but was troubled in her mind by certain anxieties and uncertainties. These she desired me to relieve. The questions asked by my correspondent are rather typical questions—questions that are generally asked by those who, approaching the stage from the outside, in the light of prejudice and misrepresentation, believe the calling of the actor to be one morally dangerous and intellectually contemptible; one in which it is equally easy to succeed as an artist and degenerate as an individual. She begins by telling me that she has a "fancy for the stage," and has "heard a great many things about it." Now, for any man or woman to become an actor or actress because they have a "fancy for the stage" is in itself the height of folly. There is no calling, I would venture to say, which demands on the part of the aspirant greater searching of heart, thought, deliberation, real assurance of fitness, reasonable prospect of success before deciding to follow it, than that of the actor. And not the least advantage of a dramatic school lies in the fact that some of its pupils may learn to reconsider their determination to go on the stage, become convinced of their own unfitness, recognise in time that they will be wise to abandon a career which must always be hazardous and difficult even to those who

[1] A lecture given to the students of the Academy of Dramatic Art, reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review*.

are successful, and cruel to those who fail. Let it be something far sterner and stronger than mere fancy that decides you to try your fortunes in the theatre.

My correspondent says she has "heard a great many things about the stage." If I might presume to offer a piece of advice, it would be this: "Never believe anything you hear about actors and actresses from those who are not actually familiar with them." The amount of nonsense and untruth (sometimes mischievous, often silly) talked by otherwise rational people about the theatre, would be inconceivable were it not for one's own personal experience. It is one of the penalties of the glamour, the illusion of the actor's art, that the public who see men and women in fictitious but highly exciting and moving situations on the stage, cannot believe that when they quit the theatre, they leave behind them the emotions, the actions they have portrayed there. And as there is no class of public servants in whom the public they serve take so keen an interest as actors and actresses, the wildest inventions about their private lives and domestic behaviour pass as current, and are eagerly retailed at afternoon teas in suburban drawing-rooms.

Now, the first question my correspondent asks me is this: "Does a young woman going on the stage need a good education and also to know languages?" To answer the first part of the question is not, I think, very difficult. The supremely great actor or actress of natural genius need have no education or knowledge of languages; it will be immaterial whether he or she has enjoyed all the advantages of birth and education or has been picked up in the streets; genius, the highest talent, will assert itself irrespective of antecedents. But I should say that any sort of education was of the greatest value to an actor or actress of average ability, and that the fact that the ranks of the stage are recruited to-day to a certain extent from our great schools and universities, from among classes of

people who fifty years ago would never have dreamed of entering our calling, is one on which we may congratulate ourselves. Though the production of great actors and actresses will not be affected either one way or the other by these circumstances, at the same time our calling must benefit in the general level of its excellence, in its fitness to represent all grades of society on the stage, if those who follow it are picked from all classes, if the stage has ceased to be regarded as a calling unfit for a man or woman of breeding or education.

The second question this lady asks me is this: "Does she need to have her voice trained, and about what age do people generally commence to go on the stage?" The first part of this question as to voice training touches on the value of an Academy of Acting. Of the value—the practical value—of such an institution, rightly conducted, there can be no doubt. That acting cannot be taught is a well-worn maxim, and perhaps a true one; but acting can be disciplined; the ebullient, sometimes eccentric and disordered manifestations of budding talent may be modified by the art of the teacher; those rudiments, which many so often acquire painfully in the course of rehearsal, the pupils who leave an academy should be already masters of, and so they will save much time and trouble to those whose business it is to produce plays. The want of any means of training the beginner, of coping at all with the floods of men and women, fit and unfit, who are ever clamouring at the doors of the theatre, has been a long-crying and much-felt grievance. The establishment of this academy should go far to remove what has been by no means an unjust reproach to our theatrical system. As to the age at which a person should begin a theatrical career, I do not think there is any actor or actress who would not say that it is impossible to begin too early—at least, as early as a police magistrate will allow. That art is long and life short applies quite as truthfully to the actor's as to

any other art, and as the years go on there must be many who regret that they did not sooner decide to follow a calling which seems to carry one all too quickly through the flight of time.

My correspondent also asks me a question which I shall answer very briefly, but which it is as well should be answered. She writes: "Are there many temptations for a girl on the stage, and need she necessarily fall into them?" Of course there are such temptations on the stage, as there must be in any calling in which men and women are brought into contact on a footing of equality; perhaps these temptations are somewhat intensified in the theatre. At the same time I would venture to say, from my own experience of that branch of theatrical business with which I have been connected—and in such matters one can only speak from personal experience—that any woman yielding to these temptations has only herself to blame, that any well-brought-up, sensible girl will, and can, avoid them altogether, and that I should not make these temptations a ground for dissuading any young woman in whom I might be interested from joining our calling. To say, as a writer once said, that it was impossible for a girl to succeed on the stage without impaired morals, is a statement as untrue as to say that no man can succeed as a lawyer unless he be a rogue, a doctor unless he be a quack, a parson unless he be a hypocrite.

To all who intend to become actors and actresses, my first word of advice would be: Respect this calling you have chosen to pursue. You will often in your experience hear it, see it in print, slighted and contemned. There are many reasons for this. Religious prejudice, fostered by the traditions of a by no means obsolete Puritanism, is one; the envy of those who, forgetting the disadvantages, the difficulties, the uncertainty of the actor's life, see only the glare of popular adulation, the glitter of the comparatively large salaries paid to a few—such

unreasoning envy as this is another; and the want of sympathy of some writers with the art itself, who, unable to pray with Goethe and Voltaire, remain to scoff with Jeremy Collier, is a third. There are causes from without that will always keep alive a certain measure of hostility towards the player. The public regard for the actor provokes in some instances the resentment of those whose achievements in art appeal less immediately, less strikingly, to their audience. But if they would only pause to consider, surely they might lay to their souls the unction that the immediate reward of the actor in his lifetime is merely nature's compensation to him for the comparative oblivion of his achievements when he has ceased to be. Imagine for one moment Shakespeare and Garrick contemplating at the present moment from the heights the spectacle of their fame. Who would grudge the actor the few years of fervid admiration he was privileged to enjoy some hundred and fifty years ago as compared with the centuries of living glory that have fallen to the great poet?

Sometimes you may hear your calling sneered at by those who pursue it. There are few professions that are not similarly girded at by some of their own members, either from disappointment or some ingrained discontent. When you hear such detraction, fix your thoughts not on the paltry accidents of your art, such as the use of cosmetics and other little infirmities of its practice, things that are obvious marks for the cheap sneer, but look rather to what that art is capable of in its highest forms—to what is the essence of the actor's achievement, what he can do and has done to win the genuine admiration and respect of those whose admiration and respect have been worth the having.

You will read and hear, no doubt, in your experience, that acting is in reality no art at all, that it is mere sedulous copying of nature, demanding neither thought nor

originality. I will only cite in reply a passage from a letter of the poet Coleridge to the elder Charles Mathews, which, I venture to think, goes some way to settle the question. "A great actor," he writes, "comic or tragic, is not to be a mere copy, a fac-simile, but an imitation of nature; now an imitation differs from a copy in this, that it of necessity implies and demands a difference, whereas a copy aims at identity; and what a marble peach on the mantelpiece, that you take up deluded and put down with a pettish disgust, is compared with a fruit-piece of Vanhuysen's, even such is a mere copy of nature, with a true histrionic imitation. A good actor is Pygmalion's statue, a work of exquisite art, animated and gifted with motion; but still art, still a species of poetry." So writes Coleridge. Raphael, speaking of painting, expresses the same thought, equally applicable to the art of acting. "To paint a fair one," he says, "it is necessary for me to see many fair ones; but because there is so great a scarcity of lovely women, I am constrained to make use of one certain ideal, which I have formed to myself in my own fancy." So the actor who has to portray Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth —any great dramatic character—has to form an ideal of such a character in his own fancy, in fact, to employ an exercise of imagination similar to that of the painter who seeks to depict an ideal man or woman; the actor certainly will not meet his types of Hamlet and Othello in the street.

But, whilst in your hearts you should cherish a firm respect for the calling, the art you pursue, let that respect be a silent and modest regard; it will be all the stronger for that. I have known actors and actresses who were always talking about their art with a big A, their "art-life," their "life-work," their careers and futures, and so on. Keep these things to yourselves, for I have observed that eloquence and hyper-earnestness of this kind not infrequently go with rather disappointing achievement.

Think, act, but don't talk about it. And, above all, because you are actors and actresses, for that very reason be sincere and unaffected; avoid rather than court publicity, for you will have quite enough of it if you get on in your profession; the successful actor is being constantly tempted to indiscretion. Do not yield too readily to the blandishments of the photographer or the enterprising editor who asks you what are the love scenes you have most enjoyed playing on the stage, and whether an actor or actress can be happy though married. Be natural on the stage, and be just as natural off it; regard the thing you have to do as work that has to be done to the best of your power; if it be well done it will bring its own reward. It may not be an immediate reward, but have faith, keep your purpose serious, so serious as to be almost a secret; bear in mind that ordinary people expect you, just because you are actors and actresses, to be extraordinary, unnatural, peculiar; do your utmost at all times and seasons to disappoint such expectations.

English actors and actresses should remember that they are fortunate at least in one respect; in no country in the world are actors so well considered, so socially acceptable as here in England. This was true more than a hundred years ago, when Voltaire bitterly compared the refusal of the Roman Catholic Church in France to bury with decency the famous actress, Adrienne Lecouvreur, with the fact that our Nance Oldfield was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey. It is equally true in, of course, a modified form to-day. Whilst, abroad, in some countries the actor and actress are barely regarded as ordinary citizens, here in England they labour under few serious disabilities. To the successful actor society, if he desire it, offers a warm and cordial welcome. The fact of a man being an actor does not debar him from such gratification as he may find in the social pleasures. And I believe that the effect of such a raising of the actor's status as has been witnessed

in the last fifty years has been to elevate the general tone of our calling and bring into it men and women of education and refinement.

At the same time, remember that social enjoyments should always be a secondary consideration to the actor, something of a luxury to be sparingly indulged in. An actor should never let himself be beguiled into the belief that society, generally speaking, is seriously interested in what he does, or that popularity in drawing-rooms connotes success in the theatre. It does nothing of the kind. Always remember that you can hope to have but few, very few, friends or admirers of any class who will pay to see you in a failure; you will be lucky if a certain number do not ask you for free admission to see you in a success.

It is to a public far larger, far more real and genuine than this, that you will one day have to appeal. It is in their presence that you will finish your education. The final school for the actor is his audience; they are the necessary complement to the exercise of his art, and it is by the impression he produces on them that he will ultimately stand or fall; on their verdict, and on their verdict alone, will his success or failure as an artist depend. But, if you have followed carefully, assiduously, the course of instruction now open to you, when the time has arrived for you to face an audience you will start with a very considerable handicap in your favour. If you have learnt to move well and to speak well, to be clear in your enunciation and graceful in your bearing, you are bound to arrest at once the attention of any audience, no matter where it may be, before whom you appear. Obvious and necessary as are these two acquirements of graceful bearing and correct diction, they are not so generally diffused as to cease to be remarkable. Consequently, however modest your beginning on the stage, however short the part you may be called upon to play, you should find immediately the benefit of your training. You may have to unlearn

a certain amount, or rather to mould and shape what you have learnt to your new conditions; but if you have been well grounded in the essential elements of an actor's education, you will start with an enormous advantage over such of your competitors as have waited till they go into a theatre to learn what can be acquired just as well, better, more thoroughly, outside it.

It has been my object to deal generally with the actor's calling, a calling difficult and hazardous in character, demanding much patience, self-reliance, determination, and good temper. This last is not one of its least important demands on your character. Remember that the actor is not in one sense of the word an independent artist; it is his misfortune that the practice of his art is absolutely dependent on the fulfilment of elaborate external conditions. The painter, the musician, so long as they can find paint and canvas, ink and paper, can work at their art, alone, independent of external circumstances. Not so the actor. Before he can act, the theatre, the play, scenery, fellow-actors, these requisites, not by any means too easy to find, must be provided. And then it is in the company of others, his colleagues, that his work has to be done. Consequently patience, good temper, fairness, unselfishness, are qualities he will do well to cultivate, and he will lose nothing, rather gain, by the exercise of them. The selfish actor is not a popular person, and, in my experience, not as a rule a successful one. "Give and take," in this little world of the theatre, and you will be no losers by it.

Learn to bear failure and criticism patiently. They are part of the actor's lot in life. Critics are rarely animated by any personal hostility in what they may write about us, though we are always inclined when we read an unfavourable criticism, to set it down to anything but our own deserving. I heard a great actor once say that we should never read criticisms of ourselves till a week

after they were written—admirable counsel—but I fear we have not, many of us, yet reached that pitch of self-restraint that would enable us to overcome our curiosity for seven days. It is, however, a state of equanimity to look forward to. In the meantime, content yourselves with the recollection that ridicule and damning criticism have been the lot at some time in their lives of the most famous actors and actresses, that the unfavourable verdict of to-day may be reversed to-morrow. It is no good resenting failure; turn it to account rather; try to understand it, and learn something from it. The uses of theatrical adversity may not be sweet, but, rightly understood, they may be very salutary.

Do not let failure make you despond. Ours is a calling of ups and downs; it is an advantage of its uncertainty that you never know what may happen next; the darkest hour may be very near the dawn. This is where Bohemianism, in the best sense of the term, will serve the actor. I do not mean by Bohemianism chronic intemperance and insolvency; I mean the gay spirit of daring and enterprise that greets failure as graciously as success, the love of your own calling and your comrades in that calling—a love that, no matter what your measure of success, will ever remain constant and enduring; the recognition of the fact that, as an actor, you but consult your own dignity in placing your own calling as a thing apart, in leading such a life as the necessities of that calling may demand, and choosing your friends among those who regard you for yourself, not those to whom an actor is a social puppet, to be taken up and dropped as he happens for the moment to be more or less prominent in the public eye. If this kind of Bohemianism has some root in your character, you will find the changes and chances of your calling the easier to endure.

Do not despond in failure, neither be over-exalted by success. Remember one success is as nothing in the history

of an actor's career; he has to make many before he can lay claim to any measure of fame; and over-confidence, an inability to estimate rightly the value of a passing triumph, has before now harmed incalculably many an actor or actress. You will only cease to learn your business when you quit it; look on success as but another lesson learnt to be turned to account in learning the next. The art of the actor is no less difficult, no less long in comparison with life, than any other art. In the intoxicating hour of success let this chastening thought have some place in your recollection.

When you begin work as actors or actresses, act whenever you can and whatever you can. Remember that the great thing for the actor is to be seen as often as possible, to be before the public as much as he can, no matter how modest the part, how insignificant the production. It is only when an actor has reached a position very secure in the public esteem that he can afford, or that it may be his duty, to be careful as to what he undertakes. But before such a time is reached his one supreme object must be to get himself known to the public, to let them see his work under all conditions, until they find something to identify as peculiarly his own; he should think nothing too small or unimportant to do, too tiresome or laborious to undergo. Work well and conscientiously done must attract attention; there is a great deal of lolling and idleness among the many thoughtless and indifferent persons who drift on to the stage as the last refuge of the negligent or incompetent. The stage will always attract a certain number of worthless recruits because it is so easy to get into the theatre somehow or other; there is no examination to be passed, no qualification to be proved before a person is entitled to call himself an actor. And then the life of an actor is unfortunately, in these days of long runs, one that lends itself to a good deal of idleness and waste of time, unless a man or woman be very determined to

employ their spare time profitably. For this reason, I should advise any actor or actress, especially in London, to cultivate some rational hobby or interest by the side of their work; for until the time comes for an actor to assume the cares and labours of management, he must have a great deal of time on his hands that can be better employed than in hanging about clubs or lolling in drawing-rooms. At any rate, the actor or actress who thinks no work too small to do, and to do to the utmost of his or her ability, who neglects no opportunity that may be turned to account —and every line he or she speaks is an opportunity—must outstrip those young persons who, though they may be pleased to call themselves actors and actresses, never learn to regard the theatre as anything but a kind of enlarged back drawing-room, in which they are invited to amuse themselves at an altogether inadequate salary.

In regard to salary, when you start in your profession, do not make money your first consideration; do not suffer a few shillings or a pound or two to stand between you and work. This is a consideration you may keep well in mind, even when you have achieved some measure of success. Apart from the natural tendency of the individual to place a higher value on his services than that attached to them by others, it is often well to take something less than you ask, if the work offered you is useful. Remember that the public judge you by your work; they know nothing and care little about what is being paid you for doing it. To some people their own affairs are of such supreme importance that they cannot believe that their personal concerns are unknown to, and unregarded by, the outside world. The intensely personal, individual character of the actor's work is bound to induce a certain temptation to an exaggerated egotism. We are all egotists, and it is right that we should be, up to a point. But I would urge the young actor or actress to be always on the watch against developing, especially in success, an extreme egotism which

induces a selfishness of outlook, an egregious vanity that in the long run weakens the character, induces disappointment and discontent, and bores to extinction other persons. Disraeli on one occasion, when asked to speak words of pregnant wisdom to the small child of an admirer, laid his hand on the infant's head, and said, "My dear child, never ask who cut off the head of King Charles I., or wrote *The Letters of Junius*; for, if you do, people will regard you as a bore, and that is the worst thing that can befall any man." I cannot help thinking that had Disraeli encountered some of those actors and actresses whose one absorbing topic is themselves, their careers, their futures, their triumphs, and their grievances, he would have said, "Do by all means ask who cut off Charles I.'s head, or who wrote *The Letters of Junius*; study the questions exhaustively, and talk about them at every opportunity; anything, any subject, however trite or well worn, would be preferable to the very limited and comparatively uninteresting topic of yourself." I would not for one moment advise an actor never to talk "shop"; it is a great mistake to think that men and women should never talk in public or private about the thing to which they devote their lives; people, as a rule, are most interesting on the subject of their own particular business in life. Talk about the affairs of the theatre within reason, and with due regard to the amenities of polite conversation, but do not confuse the affairs of the theatre, broadly speaking, with your own. The one is lasting, general; the other particular and fleeting. "Il n'y a pas de l'homme nécessaire." Many persons would be strangely surprised if they could see how rapidly their place is filled after they are gone, no matter how considerable their achievement. It may not be filled in the same way, as well, as fittingly, but it will be filled, and humanity will content itself very fairly well with the substitute. This is especially true of the work of the actor. He can but live as a memory, and memory is proverbially short.

The True Story of Eugene Aram

THE TRUE STORY OF EUGENE ARAM[1]

The poet, the novelist, and the dramatist have vied with one another in lending the charm of romance to the history of Eugene Aram; love and remorse have spread their becoming cloaks over his misdeeds; the commonplace of fiction has adorned the commonplace of fact. But it not infrequently happens that, in disengaging fact from fable, the plain truth from the attractive lie, real circumstances come to light as interesting and extraordinary as any that can be invented by the imagination of the story-teller. To record as distinct and yet present in the one man the attributes of the thoughtful and gifted scholar and those of the sordid and deliberate murderer must surely yield a more profitable and singular result than the endeavour to blend the two into a sympathetic whole, by melting together in the crucible of lachrymose heroism those discrepancies which lie at the very root of character, and everlastingly mock the efforts of the methodical biographer to force consistency upon the inconsistent.

Eugene Aram was born at Netherdale, in Yorkshire, in the year 1704. His father was a gardener, but a gardener of more than ordinary skill; he possessed a remarkable knowledge of botany, and was an excellent draughtsman. He had originally been in the service of Dr. Compton, the Bishop of London, famous for his resistance to James II., and, on leaving the bishop, had gone into the service of

[1] Reprinted from *The Nineteenth Century*.

Sir Edward Blackett, at Newby, in Yorkshire. Yorkshire was the native county of the Arams, who had not always been gardeners. Their name they derived from the village of Aram or Haram, on the south bank of the Tees. In the reign of Edward III. the family was possessed of three knights' fees near Newark. They would seem to have gradually gone further south until one Aram is found a professor of divinity at Oxford; another, whom Eugene saw, a Commissioner of the Salt Tax under Queen Anne, living at his seat in Hertfordshire. The branch to which Eugene belonged, and which had apparently remained in Yorkshire, must have fallen from the high estate of their ancestors, or had never emerged like the others from their original obscurity. The first is the more likely supposition; for Eugene Aram, though driven by circumstances to associate with the shopkeepers and ale-drapers of Yorkshire villages, was always feared and respected as a very high, proud man, solitary and retiring. He was himself fully conscious of his superiority in respect of birth and lineage, for it is to his investigations that we owe these details of his ancestry; and his assiduous study of antiquities makes his information on this point the more reliable. His portrait, too, in *The Newgate Calendar*, said by those who had seen him to be a very accurate likeness, shows a face in which there is little trace of the rough and homely; and throughout his life he seems to have attracted the regard and confidence of those whose stations in life were above his own.

Whilst working at Newby with Sir Edward Blackett, Eugene's father had bought a little house at Bondgate, near Ripon, in which he installed his wife and child, visiting them in his intervals of leisure. Here Eugene was sent to school and instructed in the Testament. At the age of fourteen he joined his father at Newby, and, with the help of Sir Edward Blackett, who seems to have been attracted by his intelligence and zeal for study, entered upon that career of intense and unwearied application to various

branches of learning on which rests his real claim to honourable recognition, and which only the misfortune of circumstance has rendered fruitless of a great result. He first applied himself to mathematics, and, self-taught, mastered the ghastly problems of the higher algebra. But his studies were interrupted at the age of sixteen by his being sent to London to fill the place of bookkeeper in the counting-house of a relative of Sir Edward's, a Mr. Christopher Blackett. After remaining two years in the counting-house Aram was attacked by a very severe form of small-pox. His mother's anxiety was so great at her son's illness that she was only prevented from journeying to London by Eugene's giving up the counting-house and returning home. Here the young man resumed his mathematical studies, and at the same time dived into poetry, history, and antiquities. But these new mistresses quite seduced him from his boyish love; poor mathematics were cruelly deserted: "The charms of the other three," he writes, "quite destroyed all the heavier beauties of numbers and lines, whose applications and properties I now pursued no longer."

As the time had come when Eugene must choose a profession, he settled upon that of a schoolmaster as the one for which he was best fitted. With that intention he returned to Netherdale, his birthplace, and there engaged himself as teacher in the village school. At Netherdale, according to Aram, he committed the first great error of his life, took the first unfortunate step which started him on his progress to the gibbet—he married. Of his wife's family nothing is known, except that Aram thought her very much beneath him, shunned her in the street, and never spoke to her in public. Those who remembered her described her as a tidy little body, a very weak, soft kind of woman, to whom Aram made an indifferent husband, a kind of woman who can hardly have affected the destiny of Aram so powerfully as he afterwards asked his friends

to believe. One friend, more indiscreet and reckless than the rest, speaks of Mrs. Aram as low, mean, and vulgar, unworthy the lofty intellect of her husband, for whom a Newton and Erasmus could alone have been worthy companions. But we shall see that the sublime visionary could stoop at times—and for purposes of his own—to society that would have been very distasteful to Newton or Erasmus, and far lower and meaner than that of his vulgar wife. Not that this inconsistency should be any reproach to Aram, for it is always the privilege of a husband to suffer in his companions what he resents in his wife ; but, when we are confronted with the high pride of the profound and solitary scholar shocked and wounded by the vulgarity of the tidy little body, we must make very sure that the high pride is not selfish vanity, and the domestic picture presented the canting old story of the great man who is unhappy and unappreciated at home.

Whatever the joys or disappointments of his early married life, Aram's zeal for learning was increased tenfold. A consciousness of his deficiencies which he acquired as soon as he began to teach others, and an irresistible covetousness for knowledge, drove him to unexampled industry. He taught himself English and Greek grammar from Lilly and Camden by learning the entire books by heart. He then entered on Latin, puzzling out the meaning of the language for himself, spending sometimes a whole day over five lines and never leaving a passage till he had perfectly comprehended it. Then followed the Greek Testament, of which he parsed every word as he proceeded. When he had done this he felt himself strong enough to read Hesiod, Homer, Theocritus, Herodotus, and Thucydides. These labours, the achievements be it remembered of a self-taught, comparatively uneducated man, occupied some ten years. In the study of language he had hit on the true bent of his intellect, the department of learning in which he could hope to achieve something ;

and neither change of place nor force of circumstances ever from this moment hindered his continual researches.

When, in 1734, "William Norton, Esquire," his friend, sent a horse and man to fetch the learned schoolmaster to Knaresborough, the change of scene only meant a change of study; Hebrew succeeded Greek, and he began to go through the Pentateuch in the original tongue as at Netherdale he had gone through the Greek Testament. And, he writes, he would have done more during the ten years he kept the school at Knaresborough if other things had not encroached on his time.

What were those other things? There was the school, there was a family of six children, and there was pecuniary embarrassment. The ten years' schoolmastering in Knaresborough had not been profitable; by the end of the year 1744 Aram had mortgaged the house at Bondgate which he had inherited from his father, and owed a considerable sum of money to his friend Mr. Norton, who had probably put him into the school in the first instance. But, in the face of subsequent events, the question suggests itself, Had these debts arisen only from the failure of the school? Was Aram's course of life during these ten years confined to the study of Hebrew and to the instruction of the youth of Knaresborough? There is mystery surrounding these ten years at Knaresborough. In 1744, without a word of warning or preparation, without a hint as to the development of such a catastrophe, we find Aram, the solitary student, the man of high pride, who cannot even condescend to acknowledge his wife in the street, this man of learning, respected by all classes—by the lettered for the real depths of his acquirements, by the unlettered for the enormous profundity of thought which in their eyes constant solitude betokens—we find this same Aram the associate of the lowest villains in the perpetration of a monstrous fraud, and the accomplice of the greatest villain of them all in the murder of their fellow-conspirator.

Next door to Aram's school in Knaresborough, was the shop of a flax-dresser by the name of Richard Houseman. This Houseman was a dark, ill-looking fellow, broad-set, round-shouldered, and wearing a brown wig, "the real picture of a murderer," as a neighbour described him. His only companion in his flax-dressing was a large black raven that perched itself at the top of the steps leading into his shop. He was looked upon as belonging to the thoroughly bad set in Knaresborough, a set which included Daniel Clarke the shoemaker, Terry the ale-draper, Iles the usurer, and Levi the Jew. These men were regarded by the good people of Knaresborough as equal to any villainy. When, at the beginning of 1744, a Jew pedlar boy who travelled with jewelry in the neighbourhood disappeared, report said that Houseman and Daniel Clarke had murdered him. That may or may not have been; but certain it is that about this time Houseman and Clarke had hit on a very much more profitable form of enterprise than murdering a pedlar boy for a few trumpery provincial trinkets. The new scheme was no rough-and-ready highway murder, such as might spring from the brain of the flax-dresser or the shoemaker; it was a subtle and ingenious fraud, and argues the presence of a superior intellect in the councils of the criminals. This was the scheme: Clarke had married a wife who was possessed of a fortune of £200; the money remained for the present in the hands of her relatives, who seem to have been unwilling to give it up until they were satisfied that Clarke was a man of some substance, and not an impecunious person who would spend his wife's fortune as soon as she got it. Clarke and his advisers saw in this reluctance of the relatives to part with the fortune a means of securing not only the £200, but a substantial sum of money in addition to it. On the strength of his wife's reputed fortune on the one hand, and to impress the reluctant relatives on the other with an idea of his substance, Clarke was to order from various trades-

men plate, linen, jewelry, watches, rings, and other articles. On the strength of these extensive purchases, which would argue substantial means, the relatives would part with the money. As soon as Clarke had the money and the unpaid goods on his hands, he was to disappear with his share of the booty, leaving the rest in the hands of his confederates. The guilt of the fraud would thus attach to Clarke alone, who would be safe away, while his accomplices would wait a convenient time to realise their shares of the profit. This plan, excellent in itself, is only imperfect as regards Clarke, who is condemned thereby to a perpetual exile, whilst his friends remain at home rejoicing. However, he appears to have been weak enough to have accepted it, and to have been prepared to say good-bye to Knaresborough for ever.

Such was the main plot; but there was an under-plot also, in which Daniel Clarke's part called for an even greater sacrifice and a more compendious farewell. As soon as the fraud was accomplished, the booty in Clarke's hands, Houseman and the third party, the latest recruit in the rascality of Knaresborough, were to murder the shoemaker and share among two instead of three Mrs. Clarke's money and the unpaid articles. The disappearance of Clarke and his property would favour with the public the idea that he had absconded, and so divert suspicion from his murderers.

His murderers! Richard Houseman and Eugene Aram! For it was the schoolmaster who had joined the flax-dresser and the shoemaker in their latest venture, and, with his neighbour Houseman, was to remove Daniel Clarke out of harm's way. Somehow or other—in what exact manner it is impossible to say—the studious recluse had drifted into an alliance with the murderous-looking shopkeeper next door, and had become sufficiently intimate with him to engage in the darkest of his designs. Aram had made Clarke's acquaintance in his love of botany; Clarke was a

skilled florist, and he and Aram spent many delightful hours in scaring away cats from the schoolmaster's garden. In these hours it may have been that Aram learnt something of his companion's projects, and was perhaps through him introduced to Houseman. Himself under the stress of financial difficulties, he saw in the rude designs of these rascals a means of relieving his own embarrassments, and, in the perfection of an intelligent plan, built up murder on robbery. "Mankind is never corrupted at once; villainy is progressive and declines from right, step by step, till every regard of probity is lost, and every sense of all moral obligation perishes." Thus spake Eugene Aram in his own defence, and certainly, in his case, these downward steps are hidden from us; suddenly, to our infinite amazement, the callous murderer emerges from the pensive seclusion of the student.

Aram has not, however, left us without any apology. After his conviction and sentence, he told the clergyman who visited him, that he murdered Clarke because he suspected him of an intrigue with his wife, and that at the time he considered he was doing right. Either Aram is here telling the truth, or, on the threshold of death, deliberately blackening his wife's character to justify his own conduct. He can only be judged in this circumstantially. Whilst local report is silent as to any connection between Clarke and Mrs. Aram, it is not silent on the unfeeling indifference with which she was treated by her husband—an indifference which makes his sensitiveness as to her moral conduct rather fantastic. *The Gentleman's Magazine* of 1759, the year of his execution, describes his conduct towards her as inhuman. The murder of Clarke, too, is surrounded by circumstances that, to a great extent, soil its character as an act of retribution on the part of a wronged husband. His devoted apologist says that all his children but one took after their mother, and that consequently Aram never considered them as his own—a

rather severe conclusion. Vanity, if it does not cause crime, seldom fails to accompany it, for there is no surer extinguisher of remorse. If, in his early treatment of his wife, Aram's vanity of birth and talent made him shun her in the public place, and asperse his children for their likeness to their mother, may not the same presumptuous vanity that wrote on the eve of his execution the lines:

> Calm and composed my soul her journey takes,
> No guilt that troubles and no heart that aches,

have prompted him to preserve his reputation among men, by vilifying the reputation of a woman whom to the very last he treated with dislike and contempt?

The best apology offered on Aram's behalf comes from an admirer who, comparing him with Houseman, exclaims: "How much greater the temptation to murder to a man like Aram, with a miserable wife and six children, than to a wretch like Houseman, who could carry all his family under his hat!" There is a greater semblance of truth in this excuse than in the plea of the faithless wife.

By February 7th, 1745, Clarke, Houseman, and Aram had, in pursuance of their plan, procured the goods, plate, linen, and jewelry from various tradesmen, and Mrs. Clarke's money from her relatives; the following day Clarke was to quit Knaresborough with his share. But, before doing so, the spoil had to be divided, and for that purpose Aram and Houseman invited Clarke to come with them to St. Robert's Cave, outside Knaresborough, where the division could be made in greater secrecy. About six o'clock on the evening of the 7th, Aram came home and told his wife to light a good fire in the room upstairs. He then went out and did not return until two in the morning with Clarke and Houseman. Something had happened to Houseman's wig, for Aram asked his wife for a handkerchief to tie about "Dicky's" head. They did not stop long; Clarke was impatient to be gone; "It will soon be

morning; we must get off," he said. The three men went out, and Mrs. Aram saw that Clarke carried a sack on his back.

At four o'clock—two hours after—Houseman and Aram returned, but this time without Clarke. They came upstairs to the room where the fire was. Mrs. Aram asked what had become of Clarke, to which Aram replied by telling her to go to bed. She refused, and the two men, who seemed to be very anxious to have the fire to themselves, were obliged to go downstairs and light another. Filled with misgiving, Mrs. Aram determined to find out the nature of this mysterious business. As she descended the stairs, she heard Houseman say, "She is coming." "We'll not let her," answered Aram. "If she does, she'll tell," said Houseman. "What can she tell?" replied her husband, "poor simple thing! she knows nothing!" to which Houseman made answer, "If she tells that I am here, that will be enough!" Aram offered to hold the door to prevent her coming in, a suggestion that by no means satisfied Houseman; if she did not tell then, he urged, she might at some other time. This reasoning quite dissipated Aram's amiable scruples. "We will coax her a little till her passion be off," he said, "and then take an opportunity to shoot her." Mrs. Aram had heard enough; she crept upstairs and, terrified out of her wits, waited until seven o'clock, when she heard the two men go out. As soon as they had gone Mrs. Aram came downstairs again and closely examined the fireplace. There were only ashes in the grate then; but on the dunghill outside she found some burnt wearing apparel, and the handkerchief she had lent Dicky to tie round his head, now bloodstained. She could not help concluding from this that something bad had happened to Clarke; but when she expressed this natural misgiving to Dicky, he was surprised, and could not imagine what she meant.

She was right all the same, in spite of Dicky's amaze-

ment. Between two and four o'clock on the morning of February 8th, 1745, Daniel Clarke had been murdered by Aram and Houseman, and his body buried in St. Robert's Cave. How he was killed, or who struck the fatal blow, is uncertain; each man charged the other with actually breaking Clarke's skull, but to Aram in all probability belongs the credit of that performance. At any rate, from Mrs. Aram's account, it is clear that both participated in the crime, and from the ordering of the fire by Aram at six on the evening of the 7th, and the use to which the fire was subsequently put, it is also clear that, whatever the motive or variety of motives, the crime was premeditated.

When Clarke's disappearance became known in Knaresborough, and the fraud that had been practised in connection with it, Aram and Houseman did not escape suspicion. In order that Aram might not be out of the way if he were wanted, he was arrested for the debt he owed to Norton; and the public was hardly reassured when he promptly obtained release by paying off the debt, and also the mortgage on the house at Bondgate. In addition to these peculiar circumstances, some of the goods obtained by Clarke were found buried in Aram's and Houseman's gardens. Once more the law laid hands on the schoolmaster, and charged him with a misdemeanour in the matter of Clarke's fraudulent proceedings; but Aram was discharged in a short time for want of sufficient evidence. As soon as he was released, he hastily quitted Knaresborough without even waiting to take advantage of his redeemed mortgage on the Bondgate house, leaving behind him his wife and family to shift as best they could. There was no repose for etymological study in Knaresborough, with that ugly reminiscence mouldering in St. Robert's Cave.

The next fourteen years of Aram's life, from his quitting Knaresborough in 1745 to his execution at York in 1759, were the years during which, in spite of frequent wander-

ings and changes of scene and occupation, he completed his study of language and lighted on the etymological discovery which, if not original, as he himself admitted, was at least the realisation of a truth at that time unimagined or unappreciated by his contemporaries. London was the first resting-place of the wandering scholar. Here he remained for two years and a half, as usher at a school in Piccadilly kept by a Mr. Painblanc. This gentleman, he says, in addition to a salary, further rewarded his services by teaching the eager linguist French. In London Aram found means of realising what was left to him of the Clarke booty; his profits from that transaction are said to have amounted to about £160, of which he must have already spent a considerable portion in meeting his liabilities at Knaresborough. On leaving Mr. Painblanc, Aram went to a school at Hayes, where he was engaged as writing-master. He remained there some three or four years, after which he spent short periods at various other schools in the south of England, returning finally to London. His circumstances at this time can have been far from prosperous, for on his second visit to London we find him earning money by transcribing Acts of Parliament for registration in Chancery. Ultimately he got an engagement as usher at the free grammar school of Lynn in Norfolk, where, at the end of seven months, he was arrested for the crime he had committed fourteen years before.

It is this period, between the murder and his arrest, that has been seized on by writers of fiction as a period of remorse and mental agony, made more poignant and terrible by the added distresses of a great passion. Of the latter no trace is to be found except in the scandalous whispers of Lynn that accuse the usher of living there with a young lady he described as his niece, but who, on his departure thence, was discovered to have been his mistress. Scatcherd, the rhapsodical apologist already alluded to, indignantly repudiates this anecdote, and

refutes it by declaring that the pseudo-niece was no other than his ever faithful and devoted daughter Sally, who accompanied him through all his wanderings, and, after her father's death, was so overcome with despair that her morals forsook her and she became the mistress of a gentleman in London. From this dire situation she was rescued by an honest publican in the Westminster Bridge Road, who married her. Of her father she ever entertained devoted and loving memories, believing that his dear spirit "was traversing the Elysian fields with the kindred shades of his beloved Homer and Virgil."

In the letter Aram wrote describing his wanderings he is silent as to his daughter's companionship; indeed, the story of his niece at Lynn is the only possible reference to it. Those who remember his arrest and his arrival at Knaresborough say nothing of any companion; and Sally's rapturous visions of the Elysian fields has a suspicious flavour of the gushing Scatcherd. Aram was a man of forty when he left Knaresborough, fifty-four at the time of his execution. The extent of his studies and the recollections of the few who have any remembrance of the usher suggest rather the moody scholar of Hood's poem than the passionate youth of Bulwer Lytton.

But on the remorseful tortures of the Aram of "The Dream" history is silent. Such evidence as exists of Aram's bearing after the murder and during the time of his trial and punishment points, not to a man of intrinsically noble nature riven by the pangs of sorrow for a crime committed under the stress of a dire temptation, but to a cold and deliberate murderer justifying his act to himself by a kind of sentimental vanity which does not hesitate before slander and falsehood to accomplish its pitiful end. There is not in Aram's conduct, from the moment of his return to Knaresborough, a prisoner charged with murder, the slightest evidence of any feeling of remorse. He is calm, confident of his acquittal, unmoved

altogether by the painful circumstance of his situation; and when, after his sentence, all hope of earthly salvation is at an end, he contemplates with sublime self-composure the approaching journey of his calm and guiltless soul. If, during fourteen years of absence from the scene of his crime, his first feelings of remorse had become dulled, surely they would have returned with all their former acuteness when the hour of expiation had arrived.

Study, continuous and unwearied, was always with him in his years of exile. From the French taught him by Mr. Painblanc he passed to Chaldee and Arabic, concluding with Celtic. When he had completed the study of the last-named language and had compared some three thousand words in that tongue with their equivalents in the Latin, Greek, and other languages, he was able to determine the affinity of the Celtic with the other European languages, and, by recognising this truth, to raise himself from *The Newgate Calendar* into every respectable biographical dictionary. All his papers, all the written records of his work, are lost, but his claim to recognition in this respect has never been disputed.

His interest in botany, to which he owed his acquaintance with his victim Clarke, continued with him during his wanderings, and in the Botanical Gardens at Chelsea he spent many delightful and instructive hours. A gentleman who used sometimes to accompany Aram on his visits to Chelsea remembers the humane solicitude with which he would remove from the path any snail or worm for fear of treading on it—a delightful trait. But Eugene Aram is not the first scoundrel who has found smashing in a man's head quite consistent with kindness to dumb animals; people, the inferiority of whose natures has prevented them from finding any good in their fellow-men, are very apt to believe that true human nature resides only in cats and dogs.

Lynn was the last resting-place of Eugene Aram before the final catastrophe. He is better remembered here than

anywhere else. He is spoken of as sullen and reserved straying alone among the flat uninteresting marshes by the river Ouse, dressed in a horseman's great coat, a great flapped hat drawn over his eyes; and—a singular peculiarity—if he heard any noise behind him, he would not merely turn his head, but swing himself round *bodily*, as if to confront an enemy. After Aram's arrest the head master of the grammar school recollected meeting the usher one night outside his bedroom door under very suspicious circumstances, and ever after congratulated himself on a lucky escape from murder; but the boys liked Aram very well, and he made a good many friends among the neighbouring gentry.

He was stopping one day with a Dr. Weatherhead, a parson living near Lynn. It was a winter's morning; but Aram, always devoted to plants and flowers, was out in the garden helping the doctor with his flower-beds. Whilst they were engaged in this occupation, a horse-dealer called to see the doctor, who was anxious to sell a horse. The dealer happened to come from Yorkshire, and, as he was talking over the bargain with the parson, he caught sight of the figure of Aram working in the garden. He immediately recognised him and told the doctor that he knew his friend. The horse-dealer, his business completed, returned to Yorkshire, and was able to tell his customers at Knaresborough the whereabouts of Eugene Aram. For the moment the information was interesting; in a month or two it became useful.

Early in the year 1758 a labourer, digging stone at Thistle Hill, near Knaresborough, came across a human skeleton. The people of Knaresborough with one voice declared that these must be the bones of Daniel Clarke. Mrs. Aram had already dropped some hints as to the fate of Clarke; now, at the coroner's inquest on the newly found skeleton, she told her story of the night of the murder. Houseman was apprehended on her evidence, and confronted with the bones. The coroner, seeing him

pale and trembling with fear, bade him take up a bone. Houseman obeyed, but, to the general astonishment, declared that the bone was no more Daniel Clarke's than it was his. Asked to explain himself, he said that Eugene Aram had murdered Clarke, whose bones were not those found on Thistle Hill, but were lying buried in St. Robert's Cave. There the skeleton of Clarke was unearthed, according to Houseman's indication. Furnished with the horse-dealer's information, now valuable indeed, Barker and Moore, two Knaresborough constables, set out for Lynn disguised as Yorkshire cattle-dealers.

Arrived at Lynn, the constables made inquiries at the local inn, where they were soon able to satisfy themselves that the man they wanted and the usher at the grammar school were one and the same person. Aram was standing in a corner of the playground when he was apprehended, handcuffed, and, amidst the tears of his pupils, driven off in a chaise to Knaresborough with his two captors. It will be seen from this that he did not *walk* between the two stern-faced men, whose proceedings are so graphically described in Hood's poem.

His arrival at Knaresborough had been eagerly awaited. As he stepped from the chaise at the door of the Bell Inn, the rustic crowd observed with admiration his genteel suit of clothes and the elegant frills hanging from his wrists—a very different figure to the impecunious schoolmaster who had left them fourteen years before. Since then Eugene Aram had been courted and respected by men who were of a position to appreciate the learned and ingenious scholar, who had known nothing of the obscure and nefarious past, who would have been shocked and startled indeed to have seen the elegant frills of the meditative usher trailing over the handcuffs.

In the parlour of the inn Aram found the vicar and a number of local gentlemen whom the singular circumstances of the crime and the personality of the criminal

had brought together. Aram conversed freely and calmly with the assembled company, and assured them of his ability to meet the charges made against him. In the midst of his conversation his wife, who had been told of her husband's arrival, entered the room with her children. He took no notice of them till he had finished his conversation with the gentry; then, turning to her, said coldly, "Well, how do you do?" He then asked after one of his sons, an idiot; his wife answered that the boy was worse; he told her that if she had followed his instructions, he would have been better.

A year passed between Aram's return to Knaresborough and his trial at York in the August of 1759. The interval of time was occupied, presumably, in some attempt to procure such evidence as would convict both Aram and Houseman without having to accept the testimony of either man against the other. Not that Aram would have offered himself as a witness against his accomplice: his firmness and courage—if such a word may be used—are as remarkable as the trembling cowardice of Houseman. Of the latter he spoke with bitter contempt. "Young woman," he said to a girl who served him with his meals in York Castle, "if you ever get married, don't take a man that has got a hen's heart, but choose one that has a cock's." His mind was so composed that even the parting agony of his dear daughter Sally did not prevent him from giving her a receipt for removing freckles. As she stood sobbing at the gates of the Castle he noticed she had become tanned and freckled with the sun. Poor Sally in the midst of her tears admitted the soft impeachment, but said she didn't know how to get rid of them. "Oh, make a wash with lemon juice, that will cure them," answered her father.

The trial of Eugene Aram took place at York before Mr. Justice Noel on August 13th, 1759. To the surprise of Aram, Houseman, who had been previously arraigned and

acquitted for want of evidence, appeared in the box as a witness for the Crown. It may be partly due to his surprise at this proceeding that in his now famous defence Aram made no effort to reply to the evidence given against him; in all probability the evidence was sufficiently clear to make an effective answer impossible. There is no report of the trial; Aram's speech is the only part preserved to us, and in this he is altogether silent as to any of the witnesses called by the prosecution. Scatcherd says that, though the wisest of men, Aram was too much of a child in a law court to make a defence that would have satisfied a judge and jury. Certainly Aram laboured under the usual disadvantages of prisoners in those days; but it is difficult to believe, from his previous career, or the ingeniousness of the defence which he did make, that he was so childlike as to have been unable to offer a refutation of the case against him, if it had been in his power to do so. His defence, as it stands, admirable in the modesty of its expression and the ingenuity of its arguments, is absolutely unconvincing.[1] It consists entirely of an attempt to show that the bones of Clarke might be the bones of some long-buried hermit, and he cites a number of instances in which such bones have been found in a similar state of preservation, in spite of a much longer interment than fourteen years. He dwells, too, with becoming diffidence on his irreproachable character and reputation, and the improbability of a man of such conduct suddenly, without any previous experience in crime, committing a horrid murder. In this argument Eugene Aram touches the very mystery of his own career. He has offered a solution of this sudden impulse to crime by accusing his wife of infidelity; we have already commented on the dubious character of that explanation. At the last let Eugene Aram speak for

[1] This was the opinion of Paley, author of the *Evidences*, who was present in court during Aram's trial, and listened with admiration to his speech.

himself. Convicted and condemned to death, he attempted suicide in York Castle the night before his execution. Before opening the veins of his arm with a razor he had concealed for the purpose, he wrote:

"What am I better than my fathers? To die is natural and necessary. Perfectly sensible of this, I fear no more to die than I did to be born. But the manner of it is something which should in my opinion be decent and manly. I think I have regarded both these points. Certainly nobody has a better right to dispose of a man's life than himself; and he, not others, should determine how. As to any indignities offered to my body, or silly reflections on my faith and morals, they are (as they always were) things indifferent to me. I think, though contrary to the common way of thinking; I wrong no man by this, and hope it is not offensive to that eternal Being that formed me and the world; and as by this I injure no man, no man can be reasonably offended. I solicitously recommend myself to that eternal and almighty Being, the God of nature, if I have done amiss. But perhaps I have not, and I hope this thing will never be imputed to me. Though I am now stained by malevolence and suffer by prejudice, I hope to rise fair and unblemished. My life was not polluted, my morals irreproachable, and my opinions orthodox.[1] I slept sound till three o'clock, awaked, and then writ these lines:

> Come, pleasing rest, eternal slumbers fall,
> Seal mine, that once must seal the eyes of all;
> Calm and composed, my soul her journey takes,
> No guilt that troubles and no heart that aches.
> Adieu! thou sun, all bright like her arise.
> Adieu! fair friends, and all that's good and wise.'

Are these lines the dignified farewell of a martyred

[1] I should think it was very doubtful whether a prison chaplain would assent to Aram's claim to orthodoxy. There is a suspicious flavour of eighteenth-century deism in his conception of God. However, the God of the Bible and the God of the philosopher are equally odious on the lips of an unrepentant murderer.

philosopher, or the egotistical exit of a criminal posing as martyr and philosopher? Would not a word or two of greeting to Mrs. Aram, of apology to Clarke, have been more seemly on such an occasion than six lines of indifferent verse in praise of his own sublime departure from this world? Over Aram's farewell, one can exclaim with Joseph Surface, "Ah, my dear sir, 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you." One would be so grateful for just some little acknowledgment of human weakness from this consciously irreproachable assassin.

Was Eugene Aram a good man struggling against adversity, as his most zealous apologist would have us believe? We are inclined to answer the question in the negative. All we can say with absolute certainty is that he murdered Daniel Clarke and discovered a European affinity in Celtic roots. For the latter achievement he is entitled to rank with scholars as well as murderers; for the former he was hanged at York, half fainting from his attempt at suicide which had been happily, or unhappily, frustrated, and his body hung in chains near Knaresborough. One of his daughters, Betty, described as a "wild girl," saw the corpse swinging in its chains on Thistle Hill and ran gleefully to tell her mother that she had seen father hanging up on the hill; the sight seemed to give her satisfaction.

Houseman withdrew with his raven from his native village, loathed and dejected, his windows having been smashed by old pupils of Aram, and died in his bed at a place called Marton.

Mrs. Aram kept a pie and sausage shop in Knaresborough, and picked up her husband's bones as they fell from the gibbet.

The Fall of the House of Goodere

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF GOODERE[1]

The Gooderes were a Herefordshire family. The first of them to emerge from the purely local importance of respectable country squires was Edward Goodere, of Burhope, who represented his county in the Parliament of 1709, and was made a baronet by Queen Anne. Rather more than twenty years before Sir Edward had married a Miss Dinely, the only daughter and heiress of Sir Edward Dinely, Bart., of Charlton, in Worcestershire. This young lady was worth £3,000 a year, and for that reason appeared to be an excellent match to the young Goodere, whose own estate brought him in an annual income of barely £1,000. Fearing lest the parents of the young lady should consider him an unsuitable husband for so comfortable an heiress, Edward Goodere at first addressed his suit to Miss Dinely without the knowledge of her father and mother, and it was only when he was sure of her affections that he dared openly to claim her hand. His discretion was rewarded. He secured the heiress as his wife, and the enjoyment of her fortune during her lifetime; but it was settled—and

[1] The materials for this tragic chapter in the history of a family are to be found in vol. xvii. of Howell's *State Trials*, and in a few contemporary pamphlets dealing with the case which are referred to in the catalogue of the British Museum Library under the heading "Goodere." One of these pamphlets is the work of Samuel Foote, the celebrated comedian, who through his mother was nephew to the two brothers whose story is here told.

[1] Reprinted from *The Cornhill Magazine*.

this is important in view of subsequent events—that on her death her fortune was to go to her eldest son. This settlement became effective by the birth of an heir, which was followed by the birth of two other sons, John and Samuel, born in 1687. As the boys grew to manhood the eldest was kept at home and educated in a way befitting his prospects, while John and Samuel were sent to sea. The first catastrophe occurring in the family, and the prelude to the bloody drama which destroyed the honour and fortunes of the house, was the untimely death of the eldest son. An amiable and accomplished youth of happy promise, he was killed in a duel in Ireland, whereupon John, the second son, was recalled from his ship, the *Diamond* (1708), to take over the responsibilities of heirship.

In the meantime the youngest, Samuel, had remained at sea, and served as a lieutenant in the navy throughout the war of the Spanish Succession. As an officer he showed himself valorous and insubordinate; though report spoke of him as acting with great bravery at Ferrol and St. Sebastian, he was convicted by a court-martial, on December 24th, 1719, of having been "very much wanting in the performance of his duty" in the latter engagement, and dismissed his ship. After this he returned home; and the next twenty years witnessed the growth and development of the feud between the two brothers which united them finally in violent death, and left to a poor eccentric the pitiful task of ringing down the curtain on the tragedy of the Gooderes with the sorrowful farce of the half-witted Knight of Windsor.

When Samuel, in consequence of the court-martial on his conduct at St. Sebastian, retired temporarily from the navy he found elements of discord already present in his family. John, since his return home on his brother's death, had not succeeded in hitting it off with his father. His short experience as a sailor had roughened a character

already marked by an unpleasing eccentricity, the first sign of that degeneracy in the family wits which reached a climax in the mad offspring of his brother. Sir Edward declared John fitter to be a boatswain than a baronet; consequently it was not difficult for Samuel, when he returned from sea, to win not only his father's confidence and support, but the general good opinion of the neighbouring gentry, who were quick to compare his attractive manners with the stubborn uncouthness of his elder brother. John rejected all his father's attempts to make him a gentleman; Samuel charmed all by his candour and good-nature, and acquired a delightful reputation for being "as gallant a young fellow as any in the navy." Certainly there were those who hinted that Samuel, with all his good-humour, was a man of violent and unscrupulous temper, and stories were told of how, as a boy, he had robbed his father's house and clapped a pistol to his mother's breast, while on another occasion he had threatened to put a brace of bullets through his father's heart if he did not supply him immediately with money to gratify his extravagant habits. The friends of John declared the elder to be a sane, upright, conscientious man, and Samuel a mischievous and daring rascal, whilst the friends of Samuel protested that the younger was the upright, dutiful, and charming son, John a cruel, grasping, irresponsible boor. The sequel would seem to show that John was the madder and more honest of the two, Samuel the saner and unquestionably the more dangerous; both in a like degree passionate, vindictive, avaricious, and rather more indifferent towards each other than brothers usually are.

The hostility of these two brothers was no private thing, one of those painfully stifled disagreements that only break out in the domestic circle. It sought public expression, and found it in a contest between them for a neighbouring mayoralty. The brothers were rival candidates, and each chose to consider himself elected. Accordingly, on the

Sunday after the election, John and Samuel, in civic robes, and with accompanying trains, raced to church in their official capacities. John arrived first, and took his place in the mayor's seat of honour. Samuel hurried after him and, having more resolute attendants, turned out his elder brother. In a Parliamentary election Samuel, by siding against the family candidate, procured his own reinstatement in the navy, and was posted to the ship *Antelope* for a fortnight with a view to obtaining promotion in rank. Such were the preliminaries in a struggle which family affairs soon hastened to a desperate conclusion.

The brothers had married—John a Miss Lawford, a Bristol heiress, who brought him £10,000 and bore him a son; Samuel a Miss Watts, by whom he had two sons and three daughters. Both these marriages were more or less unfortunate in their results. John disagreed with his wife for the same reason that he had disagreed with his father—his inability to behave like a gentleman; Samuel's two sons were weak-minded in varying degree. Sir Edward would seem to have attempted to reconcile some measure of impartiality in his sons' disputes with a decided leaning towards Samuel; but, on the death of Lady Goodere, the family greed of gold estranged him completely from the cause of John. According to his marriage settlement, Lady Goodere's separate property went on her death to her eldest surviving son. Sir Edward now found his income diminished by some £3,000. Though John allowed his father to retain the estate of Henley, in Worcestershire, to the value of £500 a year, even this concession failed to reconcile Sir Edward to the inevitable; Samuel was always at his side to remind him of his diminished income and his enforced dependence on the parsimonious John.

Jacob-like, the younger brother now set himself to supplant the elder in the inheritance of Burhope, the family property in Herefordshire, which it lay with Sir Edward to dispose of at his death. When that event

occurred, in 1739, the will of the late baronet showed that he had made an attempt to heal the now flagrant enmity of his sons by a not unfair compromise. To John, who was already well provided for, he left the enjoyment of the Burhope estate during his lifetime, with remainder to Samuel and his heirs. But, however well meant, this attempt to heal the family jars was a complete failure. Each of the brothers desired all for himself and nothing for the other. John accused his father of ingratitude in so poorly repaying his kindness in allowing him the use of the Henley property during his lifetime; Samuel was merely disappointed and enraged that Sir Edward's obvious preference for him in his latter days had received such inadequate expression in his will. John showed his sense of injury by giving his father a cheap and unworthy funeral, much to Samuel's horror; Samuel displayed his loss of self-control by hurrying down to Burhope with six ruffians, and flourishing in his brother's face a lease which he said Sir Edward had granted him before his death; he was only prevented from further acts of violence by Sir John running upstairs and taking refuge behind a blunderbuss.

In a family composed of such warring and discordant elements, in which envy, greed, and the beginnings of mental alienation are teased into mischievous activity by the manifold vexations of succession and inheritance, one cause of quarrel follows with startling rapidity on the heels of another. Sir John's eccentricity of character had not been without its effect on his married life; he treated his son with unaccountable neglect, and did everything to provoke his wife to seek consolation for her trying situation in the arms of another. Whether she had actually done so is uncertain; in any case Sir John accused her of misconduct with a neighbouring baronet, Sir Robert Jason, and by the suborned evidence of servants and tenants, if the partisans of the lady are to be believed, obtained £500 damages against the defendant. This victory

Sir John followed up by indicting Lady Goodere in the King's Bench for conspiring against his life, and she was sentenced to a year's imprisonment. In the light of subsequent events one is inclined to ask whether this last charge of conspiracy to murder was merely the fabrication of a vindictive eccentric supported by the evidence of hirelings, or should be regarded as the actual outcome of the evil influence of Samuel, who had espoused Lady Goodere's cause, and was now perhaps endeavouring to execute with her assistance the murderous design which he afterwards carried out on his own account. Samuel had undoubtedly intervened in his brother's marital affairs and, from the nature of things, taken the wife's part. But it is distinctly in favour of the lady's innocence that, when Sir John followed up his two previous actions by applying to the House of Lords for a divorce, the Lords, notwithstanding the judgment in the Common Pleas and the sentence of the King's Bench, refused to grant it. Sir John had moreover shown a distinctly vindictive spirit by suing for his divorce while his wife was still undergoing her sentence of imprisonment, and it was only through the efforts of her friends, chief among them Samuel, that she was enabled successfully to resist his suit. These facts would suggest that Lady Goodere was really suffering some sort of persecution at the hands of her peculiar husband, and that, whatever Captain Samuel's motives, he was in this instance on the side of justice.

But a circumstance befell at this time that wrought so dismal a consequence in the soul of Captain Samuel Goodere that all other causes of quarrel, secret grudges, and open hatreds paled their ineffectual fire before the flame of this new mortification. As the death of a son and heir had first brought the two brothers face to face, and made them hate each other with a deadly hate, so the death of another son and heir removed the last human being that could stand between the house of Goodere and *The Newgate*

Calendar. Sir John's only son, neglected all his life by his singular father, who had apprenticed him to a saddler, and spoilt by his easy mother, had completely wrecked his youth in dissipation, with the result that he died in miserable circumstances in the year 1740. His father showed his sense of his affliction by himself driving to the grave the hearse that contained the last remains of his posterity. Drive on, anomalous baronet! tumble young hopeful into his grave! but have a care lest your own hearse journey be not so very far away in point of time, and Brother Samuel's too! Such a nodding of plumes as there will be on the road from Bristol to Hereford before many months are past. Bristol is now a city of some interest to the Goodere family, for about November, 1740, Captain Samuel Goodere, R.N., is gazetted to his Majesty's ship *Ruby*, lying in the King's road of that city.

Only son and heir of Sir John Dinely Goodere, Bart., dead, the Dinely property in Worcestershire, left to Sir John by his mother, should pass, on his death, to Captain Samuel as next remainderman under the settlement, saving always the right of the said Sir John to cut off the entail. This right Sir John, towards the end of the year 1740, suddenly announced his intention of exercising in favour of his sister, Mrs. Foote, of Bristol, mother of Samuel Foote, comedian that is to be. In the heart of a turbulent sea captain, trained in what was then one of the finest schools for breeding ruffians from gentlemen that the world has ever seen, this latest manœuvre of a hated brother stirred a vehement desire for a final settlement of all points at issue by piratical expedients. The spirit of Cain entered into the soul of Captain Samuel: his hand is on his cutlass; he clears his decks for action.

> Now my anger's up,
> Ten thousand virgins kneeling at my feet,
> And with one general cry howling for mercy,
> Shall not redeem thee.

Captain Samuel withdraws himself to his good ship *Ruby* at Bristol. Sir John, full of infirmities, has gone to Bath to take the waters. These are the respective situations of these two elderly gentlemen in the new year of 1741. The captain is now fifty-three years old, the baronet nearing sixty, gentlemen of ripe age to be about repeating the story of the first murder.

Mr. Jarrit Smith was a Bristol solicitor, and in that capacity had acted at different times for Sir John Goodere. The baronet trusted Mr. Smith and relied on his judgment in his business affairs. It was, therefore, quite natural that Captain Goodere should confide to Mr. Smith a desire that he alleged had sprung up in his heart to be reconciled with his elder brother. This friendly spirit had come over the captain towards the end of 1740, and early in the following year Mr. Smith communicated it to his client. After some demur Sir John allowed Mr. Smith to persuade him to a meeting with his brother the next time he should come to Bristol. He was then staying at Bath, as "his heart was bad," and he was very deaf; he had been assured that the Bath waters would mend his troubles. Tuesday, January 13th, was the day finally fixed on for the meeting; Sir John was to come to Mr. Smith's house on College Green at nine o'clock in the morning, and Mr. Smith warned the penitent captain to be there in good time, as his brother was a man of exact punctuality.

Mr. Smith's warning was evidently not lost on Captain Goodere, who took rather extraordinary steps in order to be up to time. Opposite Mr. Smith's house on College Green stood the White Hart alehouse, kept by one Hobbs. On the first floor of the alehouse was a little closet where gentlemen were accustomed to sit and look out of the window while drinking. This window commanded a view of Mr. Smith's house. What more natural than that Captain Goodere, anxious to fall in with Sir John's punctual

habits, should hire this room for Tuesday morning, so that he could come on shore, take an early breakfast, and await from the window his brother's coming? But it was, perhaps, a little excessive on the captain's part to expect that this scrupulous interest in his brother's approach should be shared by Matthew Mahony, an Irish sailor on his own ship, and half a dozen ill-behaved ruffians from a privateersman then lying off Bristol. Be that as it may, the captain did elect to entertain such dubious persons on Tuesday morning, January 13th, at the White Hart alehouse, while he himself breakfasted off coffee and toast in the closet over the porch, looking out for his brother. Punctual to the hour, Sir John rode up to Mr. Smith's, followed by a mounted servant, and went into the solicitor's office. He only stayed a few moments and then rode off, saying he would be in Bristol again the following Sunday, and that he had no time to see his brother then. But his brother had seen him and thought him "looking better than he used to do," so he told Mr. Smith. He had also pointed out Sir John to Mahony and his companions, and Mahony was so much interested in the personality of the worthy baronet that he had followed him a mile or two at some speed, returning sweating to the alehouse in about an hour and a half. "Look well at him, but don't touch him," the captain had said to Mahony when he started; for the captain had observed that the baronet was riding with pistols in front of him and a mounted servant at his back. On his return to the White Hart Mahony treated himself to some ale at the captain's expense, and ordered the captain's room to be ready, dusted, and a fire lighted over against the next Saturday.

The captain in the meantime was determined not to be frustrated in his brotherly approaches. He continued full of compliment to good Mr. Smith, and was delighted when that gentleman informed him that Sir John was to be with

him again the next Sunday, the 18th, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Smith showed him a letter from his brother to that effect, and the captain remarked on the improvement in the baronet's handwriting; in Mr. Smith's opinion all things promised well for an amicable settlement.

About three o'clock on the Sunday Mahony, in a short jacket, trousers, and a leather cap, came into the White Hart and sat down to drink ale with a scabby-faced man from the *Vernon* privateer; they were soon joined by two other men, more or less ill-favoured, likewise from the *Vernon* privateer. These shady persons had just seen an old gentleman in black, with a scarlet cloak and broad-brimmed hat, alight from horseback and go into Mr. Jarrit Smith's house, opposite. He was wearing a black velvet cap over his ears, to keep them warm, as he suffered from deafness. They had recognised him as Sir John Goodere, Bart., and this time they had observed that he was without pistols and mounted servant. He had been followed into Mr. Smith's house by Captain Goodere, wearing a dark shag coat with yellow buttons and a gold-trimmed waistcoat, and carrying sword and cane. Mahony and friends were now passing the time noisily over their ale until these two brothers should come out of Mr. Jarrit Smith's house. From College Green there is a way leading down to the river, which runs by St. Augustine's Bank and the lime-kilns in the brickyard. Here Captain Goodere has ordered the barge of the *Ruby* man-of-war to be moored by three o'clock, and he is to be waited for, as he is bringing some one on board with him that evening.

Until almost the last moment Mr. Smith had every reason to be satisfied with the interview he had arranged between the brothers. True, nothing very definite had taken place in the way of a compromise; but the good feeling, nay, the affection of Captain Samuel had been so evident, Sir John so cordial and obliging, that the attorney may well have hoped for a speedy and complete adjustment

of their differences. No sooner had the Captain entered the room in which Sir John and Mr. Smith were talking together than he went straight up to his brother and, seemingly with all the affection in the world, kissed him heartily. Mr. Smith made them sit down by the fire, one on each side of him, and they drank to each other, Sir John in water, being forbidden anything else, Samuel in a bumper of wine. For some three-quarters of an hour the two brothers sat opposite to each other, chatting in a friendly way. The captain spoke of the family estate in Herefordshire, and how good the land was. At length Sir John rose up and said, "Brother, I wish you well," and, after arranging to be with Mr. Smith again at half-past eight the following morning, went out. Mr. Smith was brimming over with joy at the happy result of the interview, and with pardonable self-importance turned to the captain. "I think," he said, "I have done great things for you." But, to his intense surprise, the captain abruptly replied, "By God, it will not do!" and ran very nimbly out of the house after his brother. Mr. Smith followed him to the door, and as the two brothers turned by the wall of St. Augustine's Church he saw some sailors come out of the White Hart alehouse, one with a bottle in his hand. The captain exchanged a hurried word with them, and they all disappeared out of sight. Mr. Smith would have followed them, but he had promised to fetch his wife from a neighbour's house. "Some people think," he said on a subsequent occasion, "it was well I did not"—a very justifiable surmise.

This Sunday, January 18th, between four and five o'clock, loiterers about Mr. Thompson's dock by the lime-kilns, where Captain Goodere's barge was moored, were treated to an unusual spectacle. They saw a man with his clothes ruffled and shoved up to his armpits being pushed along by some five or six sailors, who threatened in loud tones death and damnation to any who interfered with their

proceedings. The huddled figure in their midst, they said, was a midshipman who had committed a murder, and was being taken to be tried on board his ship. But the "midshipman's" clothes got settled down after a while, and a carpenter's wife thought she recognised the face of Sir John Goodere, for whom her husband had once mended a chair. She was right; it was indeed Sir John, and as they drove him on, he struggled and called out his name, and said they were going to murder him. But no one heeded his cries. The proceeding acquired respectability from a gentleman in a shag coat and gold-trimmed waistcoat, who, with cane poised in one hand and sword in the other, marched by the side of the ruffians and ordered their speed. Arrived at the water's edge, a plank was put out to the barge, and the murderous "midshipman" pushed into the stern-sheet. But before the boat was well off from the water-side the "midshipman" cried with a loud voice to those standing near, "For God's sake, gentlemen, if any of you know Mr. Jarrit Smith in the College Green tell him my name is Sir John Dinely"——"Goodere," he would have added, no doubt, had not the authoritative gentleman in the shag coat stuffed the flap of his coat into his mouth, exclaiming loud enough for those on land to hear, "Haven't you given the rogues of lawyers money enough already? Do you want to give them more? I'll take care they shall never have any more of you; now I'll take care of you."

The captain's method of taking care of his brother was certainly an original one. The fashion in which Sir John had been conveyed to the barge was, perhaps unavoidably, coercive. And the baronet was hardly reassured when the captain, it being a bitterly cold night, pulled off his brother's red cloak and put it over his own shoulders. Sir John asked what "the captain was going to do with him." "I am going to carry you on board, to save you from ruin and from lying rotting in a jail," was the reply. "I know

better things," answered the elder; "I believe you are going to murder me. You may as well throw me overboard and murder me here as carry me on board ship and murder me." "No," replied the younger, "I am not going to do any such thing, but I would have you make your peace with God." They said no more, for Sir John, deprived of his cloak, was soon numbed by the cold, and sat still, groaning in bodily distress.

It was between seven and eight at night when Captain Goodere, "in a pleasant humour," came on board the *Ruby*. He greeted his officers in happy fashion. "How do you all do, gentlemen? Excuse me, gentlemen, from going the right way to-night, for I have brought an old mad fellow on board, and I must take care of him"; and the officers saw the object of his care come groaning up the side of the ship, a chilled old gentleman in a black cap, who "looked much surprised, as a person used ill." As soon as he had been got roughly on board the "old mad fellow" was hauled down to the purser's cabin, which had been already cleaned out by the captain's orders for the reception of a visitor. The visitor complained of a pain in his thigh, occasioned by his rude treatment, and the captain offered him a dram, which he refused, nor would he allow his wet clothes to be shifted. Mahony, the Irishman, made to take them off, but he stopped him: "Don't strip me, fellow, until I am dead." He was searched, and a knife taken from him. He asked them to take care of it, for it had been his son's knife, and several times during that night he was heard to ask for this knife. Before leaving his charge the captain sent for the ship's carpenter to put two bolts on the cabin door, and a sentinel, one Buchanan, was placed outside with a naked cutless in his hand.

The "madman" gave Sentry Buchanan little trouble in his watch. He groaned a good deal, and about eleven required some assistance. Mahony, the Irishman, went in

to see after him. The old gentleman was still uneasy as to his fate. He asked Mahony if his brother had said he was mad. "Formerly," he said, "I used to be so, but now I have not tasted wine these two years." He could not believe, he added, that the men who had attacked him that day were sailors, "for, if so, they are sadly degenerated from what sailors were formerly; for I myself have been at sea, and might have been a commander." Then for a space they talked together of the East Indies, until Mahony left him. And after that one that lay in an adjoining cabin, Jones, the ship's cooper, heard the gentleman pray to God to be his Comforter in his affliction; he said to himself that he knew he was to be murdered, and prayed that it might come to light by one means or another. But the cooper did not heed his words, thinking him to be a madman.

The poor "madman" was right none the less. Though he knew it not, he had just talked amicably with his executioner. Mahony was now in the captain's cabin, and the captain busy preparing for his brother a truly grievous instance of the degeneracy of modern seamen. Shakespeare has immortalised in more than one of his plays the kind of interview that passed between Captain Goodere and the Irishman. The former did not waste words; Mahony, he said, must murder his brother, and that before four the next morning. Mahony objected; the captain insisted. Mahony said he could not do it alone. Then he must do it with some one else. With whom? The captain suggested one Elisha Cole, but Elisha had been drunk all day, and was therefore not to be relied on. Then the captain sent for Charles White, a very stout, lusty fellow, and produced a bottle of rum. He told White a madman had to be murdered. With the help of sundry drams and promises of reward Mahony and White were brought at last to the sticking point. But how was it to be done? The captain produced a piece of

half-inch rope about nine feet long, in which White made a noose. This round the neck and a handkerchief over the mouth ought, in the trusty hands of Mahony and White, to settle the madman for good and all; the captain promised to keep guard outside, to prevent interruption.

About midnight Buchanan, the sentry, was sent for to the captain's cabin. There he found the captain and Mahony drinking rum. The captain asked him how his brother was. Buchanan replied that he groaned a little. "Ah!" said the captain, "I am coming down by and by to shift him with dry stockings"; and some time after, in pursuance of his kind intention, the captain did accordingly come down to the cabin and, taking his cutlass from him, relieved Buchanan of any further sentry duty. All was now in order for the shifting of Sir John's stockings.

Jones, the ship's cooper, had fallen asleep after hearing the madman's prayers. It was the slop room in which he and his wife were sleeping; only a thin deal partition with a crack in it separated this apartment from the purser's cabin, so that what occurred in one room would be quite audible and partially visible to any person lying in the other. About two o'clock Mrs. Jones was awakened by hearing voices in the purser's cabin. Mahony was talking to the madman. The latter could not sleep. Mahony offered to take a letter for him to Bristol. Then she heard some one say to him, "You must lie still and not speak a word for your life," and then a sound as of a struggle. She waked her husband. "Don't you hear the noise," she whispered, "that is made by the gentleman? I believe they are killing him." Jones listened. What happened afterwards is best told in his own words. "I then heard him [the gentleman] kick and cry out, 'Here are twenty guineas: take it; don't murder me. Must I die? Must I die? Oh, my life!' and give several kecks with his throat, and then he was still. I got up in my bed; I saw

a light glimmering in at the crack, and saw Mahony with a candle in his hand. The gentleman was lying on one side. Charles White was there, and he put out his hand to pull the gentleman upright. I heard Mahony cry out, 'Damn ye, let us get his watch out.' White laid hold of him, and went to tumbling him up to get out his money, and unbuttoned his breeches to get out his watch." At last White got it out and gave it to his companion. The gold and silver he took out in like fashion from the dead man's pockets, Jones still peering through the partition. "He [the gentleman again] lay in a very uneasy manner with one leg up; and when they moved him he still remained so, which gave me the suspicion that he was dead. White put his hand in another pocket, took out nothing but a piece of paper, and was going to read it. 'Damn ye!' said Mahony, 'don't stand to read it!'" And then Jones, the cooper, still watching, saw a person's hand on the throat of this gentleman, and heard the person say, "'Tis done, and well done." "It was a hand whiter than that of a common sailor. I have often seen Mahony's and White's hands, and I thought the hand was whiter than either of theirs." That white hand is beyond a doubt the hand of Captain Samuel Goodere. He has been at the door all the time, naked cutlass in hand, waving back any whom chance brought at that hour near the purser's cabin. He has taken a candle from Buchanan and handed it into the cabin to illuminate the better what was passing within. And now, somewhere about three o'clock, the stockings have been shifted, and Mahony and White will soon be on their way to Bristol in the captain's own boat with a store of guineas and a gold watch. The captain has locked the door of the purser's cabin and put Buchanan on duty there again, with orders to fetch him if the madman make any noise—a rather unlikely eventuality.

Jones, the cooper, and Mrs. Jones were not the only persons on board who had heard something of this pro-

ceeding in the purser's cabin. Mr. Dudgeon, the surgeon's mate, sleeping three yards off from the same cabin, had been similarly awakened, and had heard quite enough to satisfy him that some foul work was being done on the old madman. As soon as he heard the captain lock the door of the purser's cabin and return to his own he got up stealthily and, groping in the dark, came across Mr. Heathorne, the watch. He could not see his features, but, recognising his voice, whispered, "Mr. Heathorne, here hath been a hellish cabal to-night. I believe they have murdered the gentleman." His suspicions were confirmed when Heathorne told him that the captain had ordered the boat out to take some one on shore. Determined to know the worst, the two men crept down to the purser's cabin and questioned Buchanan, who was still on guard. In a short time they were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Jones, "shaking and trembling," the horror of the night still on them. They told their story, and it was agreed that it should be communicated without delay to the lieutenant. But first they would satisfy themselves that the gentleman was really dead. In the wall of the steward's cabin, which divided it from the purser's, there was a scuttle. As they drew it a cat flew out in their faces—an unpleasant shock to these awe-stricken men, harrowed by the experiences of the night. Recovered from this surprise, they looked again and saw the gentleman lying on the bed in the posture Jones had described to them. About his neck a cloth was tied, and on the neck itself were marks of finger-nails; blood was oozing from his nose and mouth, all things pointing to a recent strangulation. The cooper prodded the body with a long stick, but there was no sign of life.

Mr. Dudgeon at once acquainted the lieutenant with these facts, but it was agreed that no action should be taken till the morning. There was an evident reluctance on the part of the officers to accept the responsibility of

laying hands on their captain. Apart from his rank, he had always behaved to them in a "very genteel manner," and it seemed to them very painful to be obliged now to seize him as a fratricide. The lieutenant declined to prevent Mahony and White from leaving the ship, as they had the captain's permission. He would wait till morning, to see if the gentleman was really dead, a fact which was hardly beyond doubt. At eight in the morning he still refused to proceed any further until he had seen whether or no the captain sent down to the purser's cabin. When the captain invited Mr. Dudgeon and the lieutenant to breakfast with him they accepted his invitation. Indeed, it is difficult to say what course they would have pursued had not the cooper, Jones, indignant at the crime of which he had been an accidental witness, declared his intention of writing to the Admiralty and the Mayor of Bristol if the lieutenant still refused to arrest the murderer. Jones's determination proved effectual, and the lieutenant took the necessary steps to secure his commander.

Accompanied by Jones and Buchanan, he knocked at the door of the captain's cabin and asked him to come out and drink a glass of wine with him. The captain, his suspicions aroused, declined the invitation. The lieutenant opened the door and went in, followed by the two others. As they laid hold of Goodere he exclaimed, "Hey! hey! what have I done?" and when they told him the reason of his arrest he added, "What if the villains have murdered my brother? can I help it? I know nothing of it." The same night Mahony and White were taken in Bristol.

Such is the story of the murder of Sir John Goodere, Bart., by his brother, Captain Samuel Goodere, of the *Ruby* man-of-war. Apart from the consanguinity of the two principal actors, the crime is one fraught with circumstances of peculiar horror; the age of the victim, the cruelty of his treatment, his seizure by ruffians in the open

streets of Bristol, his imprisonment in the dark cabin of the man-of-war, his six hours' agony, and finally his brutal assassination, are in themselves sufficiently shocking occurrences. But in this instance the ordinary circumstances of violent crime are heightened by touches which would have been highly creditable to a writer of romance. Leslie Stephen has written of the white hand seen by the ship's cooper through the crack in the partition;[1] and there are many other incidents hardly less ghastly which embellish that night of murder in the bowels of His Majesty's ship the *Ruby*.

The trial of Captain Goodere and Matthew Mahony took place at Bristol, on March 26th, before Serjeant Michael Foster, Recorder of that city, afterwards a distinguished judge of the Court of King's Bench. The story of the murder was recapitulated at length by the various witnesses, and its completeness left no hope of acquittal for the prisoners. Certain points of law raised by Captain Goodere's counsel were speedily overruled. The captain himself attempted to meet the charge by calling evidence of his brother's insanity and his own respectability. In regard to the first point, though undoubtedly eccentric, the baronet seems to have been considered quite sane by those who knew him best. From what he himself said to Mahony on the night of the murder, he would appear to have at one time rather aggravated his peculiar temper by drinking too much wine, but for two years before his death he had been a water-drinker. As to the captain's other defence, it is immediately obvious that neighbourly kindness and punctual attendance at divine service—pleasant features in the captain's disposition sworn to by his witnesses—cannot be considered as valid excuses for fratricide.

The captain's conduct after sentence of death had been passed upon him was a strange mixture of penitence for his

[1] Essay on "State Trials" in vol. iii. of *Hours in a Library*.

crime and a desire to avoid his punishment. He not only addressed repeated petitions to his friends to intercede for his life, but conspired with certain colliers to rescue him on the day of execution. At the same time he admitted that justice had most deservedly overtaken him, regretted that he had involved Mahony and White in a similar fate, and, when all hope of pardon was at an end, met his death with fortitude. He was executed with his two accomplices at eleven o'clock on the morning of April 20th, and next day his body was carried in a hearse with six horses to Hereford, where it was buried along with that of his murdered brother and those of his honourable ancestors.

. . . . . .

In 1809 a poor knight of Windsor died at the advanced age of eighty. This poor knight was the last survivor of the House of Goodere, Sir John Dinely Goodere, Bart., second son of Captain Samuel Goodere, who had been executed for fratricide in 1741. The death of his elder brother, Edward, had brought him the baronetcy. That eccentricity which had marked the proceedings of his immediate ancestors was developed to the point of mania in the poor knight of Windsor. He had sold the family estates of Burhope, and the charity of Lord North procured him his pension and residence at Windsor. There he was noted for his exaggerated frugality, his costume of the time of George II., in which he always appeared on important occasions, and the fantastic proposals of marriage which he delivered in printed form and with courtly gravity to any lady who attracted his attention. When, twice or thrice a year, he visited Vauxhall or the theatres, he publicly announced the fact in the fashionable newspapers, and repeated his offers of marriage to any ladies who would take advantage of the advertisement to make the acquaintance of the odd, old gentleman. At Windsor he lived by himself, and locked up his house when he went out.

Unless the presence of royalty demanded the faded magnificence of the suit of the time of George II., he made his purchases in the town clad in a large cloak or roquelaure which concealed all but a pair of dirty silk stockings; a formidable umbrella and pattens completed his equipment. This strange, fantastic figure of a man represented the last chapter in the strange and bloody story of his house. At his death the title became extinct; but in *The State Trials*, *The Newgate Calendar* and *The Penny Magazine* the House of Goodere enjoys a celebrity beyond that to be acquired in the staid columns of *The Extinct Baronetage*.

The Fualdès Case

THE FUALDÈS CASE

From a lofty eminence, some 1,800 feet above the level of the sea, the ancient city of Rodez frowns, with grim and sinister aspect, on the rugged and hilly country of the Aveyron department, which surrounds and shuts it in from the rest of France. At the beginning of the last century the inhabitants of Rodez, remote from the higher civilisation of Paris and the great cities, communicating with difficulty with their neighbours, yet retained something of the roughness and violence, the lawlessness and cunning that had made them in the Middle Ages such useful subjects to the ruthless Counts of Armagnac. Since Henry IV. incorporated Rodez into the kingdom of France, the city had lost all political importance; she led her own solitary existence, comparatively undisturbed by external commotions. Revolution, Empire, the White Terror of the Restoration, had left little trace on her history; the bitter animosities that troubled France after the return of Louis XVIII. to his throne were ineffectual to seriously compromise her peace. If within her gates there were angry feuds dividing and agitating the families of some of her most important and respectable citizens, these sprang from motives personal rather than political, private rather than public.

Suddenly, on the morning of March 20th, 1817, Rodez woke from her "ancient, solitary" repose to find herself on the threshold of a lurid notoriety that was to attract to her steep and narrow streets, and her rough citizens,

the regard not only of all France, but, in time, that of Europe as well.

What a French writer has styled the *cause célèbre par excellence*[1] was upon her. The dead body of one of her most noteworthy inhabitants, a man who had played his small part in the drama of the Parisian Terror, and held judicial office under Napoleon, had been taken out of the river Aveyron, some half a league away from Rodez, at daybreak on March 20th, bearing every trace of foul and deliberate murder. The story of that murder, the strange circumstances that accompanied it, the perjury and intimidation that beset at every turn the course of justice, go far to warrant the supremacy accorded by M. Fouquier to the case, best known to posterity by the name of its victim, Antoine Bernardin Fualdès.

In the March of 1817 M. Fualdès was nearly fifty-six years of age. Originally an advocate, the Revolution drew him for a short time into politics, and he became one of the foremost republicans in Rodez. Thence, in 1793, he was summoned to Paris to serve as one of the permanent jurymen attached to the newly created Revolutionary Tribunal. But the functions of a revolutionary juryman were little to his taste. After taking part in the conviction of Charlotte Corday, and barely escaping popular ill-treatment for having voted for the acquittal of the unfortunate General Custine, he left Paris and disappeared from public life until after the fall of Robespierre. He was then appointed a judge of the Criminal Court of Rodez; he held with success various judicial offices until the reorganisation of the law courts under Napoleon, when he was nominated to the post of Procureur Impérial attached to the Tribunal of First Instance in that city. On the return of the Bourbons he prudently resigned his office, and by so doing received a pension instead of summary dismissal. At the time of

[1] A. Fouquier, *Causes Célèbres de tous les Peuples*, vol. v.

his death Fualdès was engaged in selling landed property and winding up his affairs, with a view to settling down in an easy and honourable retirement.

About eight o'clock on the evening of March 19th M. Fualdès had left home with a packet of papers under his arm, to keep a business appointment. About half-past eight the same evening his walking-stick was picked up at the corner of a street known as the Rue des Hebdomadiers, a narrow, sordid alley containing at least one house of notoriously ill repute. Between eight and nine passers-by had observed a rather unusual commotion going forward in this usually silent and deserted street—men going to and fro, a sentinel posted as if watching for some one, the arrival of the one so eagerly expected, who seemed to answer in some particulars to the description of M. Fualdès, then a noise as of a struggle and cries and moans proceeding from the house of ill repute, and all this to the accompaniment of a couple of barrel-organs that paraded the street for a whole hour, from eight to nine, making night hideous, seeking as it were to drown, by their incessant grinding, all other disquieting noises. A little after nine, a few steps from the house of ill repute, some one picked up a dirty pocket-handkerchief, twisted and bitten, as though it had served as a gag.

The river Aveyron, which runs by the city of Rodez, is about seven furlongs distant from the Rue des Hebdomadiers. The way from this street to the river-side lies by the Rue du Terral, through the Place de l'Évéché, on which stands the cathedral, and then out at one of the city gates on to the Boulevard d'Estourmel, which runs along the bank of the river. About ten o'clock on the night of the 19th, along this very line of route, at three different places, by the cathedral, on the Boulevard d'Estourmel, in some gardens at the river's edge, four persons spoke to meeting a procession of men carrying some heavy burden, preceded by a man of exceptionally

tall stature, carrying what appeared to be a gun or thick stick, whose threatening aspect effectually discouraged curiosity or comment. The following morning the corpse of M. Fualdès, fully dressed, was dragged out of the river by a woman who had noticed a dark bundle floating on the water. A huge wound in the throat, apparently inflicted with a rather blunt knife, that had severed the larynx, the jugular vein, and the left carotid artery, was the one and sufficient cause of death. M. Fualdès had been clearly the victim of assassination; it only remained to discover the assassins.

It was not long before the circumstances already narrated directed the attention of the judicial authorities to that forbidding Rue des Hebdomadiers, and from the street to the house of ill repute therein situate, as the probable scene of Fualdès' murder. This house was tenanted by a couple of the name of Bancal, sordid and impecunious, who eked out the precarious earnings of the man as a mason by taking in lodgers and letting out their own squalid apartments as a meeting-place for clandestine lovers of all classes, who would feel well ensured against discovery in so obscure and undesirable a neighbourhood. Various unusual occurrences in the Bancal household had provoked the neighbours' criticism on the day following the disappearance of Fualdès. The floor of their kitchen had been scrubbed very recently; the woman Bancal had been to the river with some washing, but had come back without it; the man had paid a debt of thirty sous, an altogether unwonted proceeding on his part; their eldest daughter appeared to be in a state of ill-disguised terror; and lastly, on search being made, a quantity of blood-stained linen was discovered by the police hidden away under the staircase.

On the Bancals' second floor there resided, as their lodger, a sinister individual of the name of Colard. This man's supreme ambition in life was to fill the post of

public executioner, but unfortunately the office was not at the moment vacant. In the meantime he lived on his mistress, the woman Anne Benoit, who took in washing. Colard was himself dissatisfied with the existing social system, and looked back with regret to the period when the guillotine played a more conspicuous part in the solution of social and political differences. He held openly the opinion that a man who had twenty-five louis deserved to be shot, and expressed himself as fully prepared to pull the trigger in such a case—if he thought no one was looking. He spent a good deal of his time at the house of the public executioner, to whom he must have been a thoroughly inspiring companion.

Immediately after the murder of Fualdès, the mistress of this Colard, whilst denying to the police any knowledge of what had passed at the Bancals' on the night of the 19th, let fall certain observations which revealed some acquaintance with the circumstances of the crime. "Fancy," she said to a neighbour, "they bled him on the table like a pig." She admitted that the handkerchief picked up in the street was hers. When Colard was questioned about the crime, he merely answered, with an air of mystery, "There'll be a good many more." To obviate any such repetitions, the examining magistrate issued warrants on March 22nd for the arrest of Colard, the two Bancals, and their daughter Marianne.

Two more arrests were made on the 24th. Jean Bousquier, a stableman of hitherto respectable character, sitting in a tavern, talking, on the night of the 20th, had remarked, in the course of conversation, that he had been very well paid for a load he had carried the night before. "Ah!" said one of the other topers, "perhaps M. Fualdès was inside it." "Perhaps," replied Bousquier; "it was heavy enough." It was recollected that this same Bousquier had been in the tavern about eight o'clock on the night of the murder, waiting, as he

said, for a man who had engaged him to carry a bale of contraband tobacco, and that about ten o'clock this man had come in and fetched him away. Bousquier was arrested. He said that the man who had employed him was an individual named Bach. He too was arrested.

So far the murder of Fualdès would appear to have been little better than the commonplace handiwork of daring ruffians, who had waylaid, robbed, and murdered a respectable middle-aged gentlemen. But great was the astonishment of the city of Rodez when, three days after the arrest of Bach, that is, on March 27th, two of her most influential and important citizens were clapped into prison, charged, on very grave suspicion, with being the prime movers and instigators in the assassination of the worthy ex-magistrate, and the charge appeared the more heinous from the fact that both the inculpated persons had been close friends of the murdered man, and one of them his relation by marriage. This was a certain Jausion, a banker and broker, a precise and avaricious man of business, said to be hard and usurious, but enjoying a reputation for commercial integrity. He was known to have had business dealings with his kinsman Fualdès. His companion in arrest was his brother-in-law, Bastide-Gramont, a man of exceptionally large stature, who lived a little way outside Rodez. His character and reputation were the very reverse of his brother-in-law's. Coarse and brutal, he spent more than his modest means would allow on wine and women. He was bold, daring, and unscrupulous. If rumour was to be believed, he had on one occasion demanded money from his father, and, on being refused, had held a pistol to his parent's head. His short way with importunate creditors was to threaten them with death. But it was not alone his exceptional stature that seemed to identify Bastide with the tall, burly man who had been described as leading the mysterious procession that wended its way towards the banks of the

river on the night of March 19th. There was more than that to connect him with the tragedy of M. Fualdès' death. On the afternoon of the 19th Bastide had been seen talking to Fualdès in the street; he was overheard making an appointment with him for eight o'clock that evening; the discussion had been heated. "So that is the way you propose to keep your word to me!" exclaimed Fualdès. "Don't worry," Bastide was heard to reply, "I'll clear up my account with you this evening." Certain incidents that had taken place in the course of the day following the crime, coupled with the discoveries made by the son of Fualdès when, on his arrival in Rodez, he tried to set in order his father's papers, cast still graver suspicion on both Bastide and Jausion. Of his father's papers, of those more particularly that related to his financial affairs, the son could make little or nothing. He found them in hopeless confusion, all the most important missing. This was the more astonishing as he knew his father to be very regular and punctilious in such matters, and to have been at the time of his death on the point of setting his affairs in order, previous to his approaching retirement to the property which he had purchased in the country. It was from his father's servants that the son first obtained a clue to the strange disorder in which he found the drawers and cupboards in his father's room. That room had been visited on March 20th, first by Bastide, and later by Jausion. During the morning of that day a maid of Madame Fualdès' had met Bastide on the staircase, had followed him up, seen him enter M. Fualdès' room, and there rummage and search in a chest of drawers, which he afterwards locked, giving the key to another of the servants with a direction to return it to Madame Fualdès. Later in the morning, according to the evidence of another servant, Jausion arrived at the house, accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law. They also made for the room of the murdered man. There Jausion borrowed a hatchet,

broke into certain chests and cupboards, and carried off a bag, warning the servant, a man of rather limited intelligence, not to mention this circumstance to any one.

In the light of these extraordinary proceedings, it seemed only reasonable to place Bastide and Jausion under arrest. They both protested their innocence. Jausion at first denied that he had visited the house of Fualdès on the 20th. Later he admitted the visit and the breaking open of a cupboard, but said that in so doing he had acted in his kinsman's interests. In the meantime the magistrate in charge of the case had procured from one of the humbler participators in the crime a confession that directly implicated Bastide. This came from Bousquier, the man who had been hired by Bach on the night of the murder to carry what he was pleased to term a load of contraband tobacco. He said that he had been taken by Bach to the house of the Bancals, that there he found, besides the Bancals themselves, Colard, a cutler named Missonier, a woman whom he did not know, and two gentlemen, one of whom he identified unhesitatingly as Bastide; but he could not say for certain that the other, the shorter of the two, was Jausion. He was shown a bundle wrapped up in some woollen material, and told it was a corpse, Bastide threatening to kill him if he divulged the fact. He then described the journey to the river, corroborating the evidence of those passers-by who had deposed to meeting such a procession on the night of the 19th. Besides this confession of Bousquier, the two little children of the Bancals, a boy of eight and a little girl, Magdeleine, let fall to those who had charge of them at the hospital whither they had been removed after their parents' arrest, observations that shed some further light on the manner of Fualdès' death. "I saw them bring a gentleman in from the Place de la Cité," said the little girl. "He was very naughty, and wouldn't keep still on the table, so that it upset." The boy said: "Two gentlemen

came to our house : one of them had big boots on ; they brought in a gentleman who was ill and put him on the table ; that's why they've sent papa to prison."

But these partial avowals, these stray hints that some of the prisoners had allowed to escape them as to the events of March 19th were soon to be superseded by a detailed confession of a dying man, obtained under circumstances of a solemn and dramatic character. The man Bancal, in whose house it was evident the murder had been committed, overcome by remorse, had attempted his life in the prison at Rodez. In the bottom of a shoe he had soaked some copper coins in vinegar, and so concocted a solution of verdigris. This he drank, and, though an emetic was administered to him, the poison worked with rapidly fatal result on a man who was already suffering from gaol fever. Death was approaching ; the wretched man begged that he might see a priest. On May 1st the priest arrived at the prison. He brought with him a friend, and it is from a letter written by the priest's secular companion to one of the deputies for the Aveyron department that we derive a full report of Bancal's confession. Fortunately the confession had not partaken of a strictly religious character ; though, from considerations of justice, it was not used at the trial, it remains the most complete account of the actual circumstances of the murder of Fualdès and was borne out in all its principal details by the evidence subsequently given in the courts of law. The priest had found Bancal in a very communicative frame of mind. The wretched man had only a day or two to live ; he declared himself to be haunted by the spectre of M. Fualdès. It was the first of May ; the birds were singing in the garden of a convent adjoining the prison. "Ah ! they sing because they're not shut up in a cell," exclaimed the dying man. "No," replied the priest, "because they're innocent. God sends joy to the innocent. There was a time when you sang in the vineyards." "I

didn't sing on the 19th of March," groaned the prisoner, "when my little Magdeleine——." And so, by easy stages, the priest led the culprit on to the revelation of the truth.

According to Bancal, miserable poverty and a bad wife had been the causes of his downfall. His poverty was no doubt acute, and, if his confession is to be believed, his wife had been of two minds as to allowing her own child to be murdered for 500 frs. The Bancals, for some time previous to the crime, had been acquainted with the principal actors in the tragedy of Fualdès' death. Bastide made use of their house as a convenient place for carrying on his illicit love affairs, while from both the families of Jausion and Fualdès they had received charitable assistance of a modest kind in the way of loaves of bread and the leavings of the table. Indeed, Bancal, on his death-bed, complained of the very trifling character of the help thus extended to him, and pronounced Jausion to be a cunning skinflint.

The first hints that Bancal received that any exceptional proceeding, affecting him, was in contemplation on the part of two of his benefactors, were mysterious allusions dropped by Bastide and Jausion to means they were about to afford him of relieving the grinding penury in which he had lived so long. But his wife would seem to have been more in the confidence of the conspirators than he was. The murder of Fualdès was originally to have taken place in a stable belonging to the cutler, Missonier; but he had a lodger, a professional beggar, who came home at nine and went to bed at uncertain hours. Consequently, at the last moment, the scene was shifted to the Bancals' tenement, a sudden change of venue that will account for some of the serious misadventures that attended the assassins in the execution of their design.

On the evening of the 19th Bancal returned home

from the vineyard in which he laboured, about half-past six. The first thing that struck him as unusual were the violent performances of the grinders of the hurdy-gurdy, disturbing the ignoble repose of the Rue des Hebdomadiers. Bancal expressed his opinion of their efforts by throwing the remains of a salad at the heads of the musicians. But they merely shifted their ground and recommenced a little farther off with all the added vigour of remonstrance. If, as has been supposed, these musicians had been hired deliberately by the assassins of Fualdès to drown all inconvenient noise, it is plain that the Bancals were only partially in the secrets of the conspirators. It was a quarter past eight when Colard, whose appetite for the blood of the rich had for some days past betrayed signs of approaching satisfaction, burst into the Bancals' kitchen, and abruptly ordered them to send the children to bed, as there was a gentleman coming up the street to keep an appointment with a lady. He then went out. He had hardly done so, when there was a knock at the door. The woman Bancal opened it and admitted a lady wrapped in a shawl and wearing a black veil. She was trembling. "No one for me?" she asked. "No one," replied la Bancal. In the meantime the noise in the street was getting louder and louder, coming nearer to the house; the hurdy-gurdies shrieked with redoubled vigour; there was an advancing sound as of men whistling and shouting. The lady was terrified at the thought of discovery; there was a loud knocking at the outer door; she begged the woman Bancal to conceal her; the latter, equally dismayed, pushed her hurriedly into a cupboard and shut the door, as Colard appeared on the threshold of the kitchen, a lighted candle in his hand.

He entered the room quickly, followed by a number of men, among them M. Bastide and M. Jausion, breathless and excited, who were dragging along an elderly gentleman, hatless, his clothes torn and dishevelled, whom

Bancal recognised immediately as M. Fualdès. "In God's name, what do you want with me?" asked the bewildered gentleman. "Your signature to these papers," replied Jausion. "It is a disgraceful outrage!" cried Fualdès. But the protest passed unheeded. Bastide fetched a pen and ink and Fualdès wrote his name on some long papers that Jausion produced from a letter-case. As he was doing this, Bancal saw Colard whisper in Bastide's ear and show him a knife, upon which Bastide, half laughing, exclaimed "Good!" Fualdès, as soon as he had finished writing, asked if that was all. "I know you," answered Jausion. "After what I've just done you'll never forgive me." "No one knows better than you what I have forgiven you," retorted Fualdès, with a sigh. "Oh! you regret it, do you?" "Yes, you see he does!" chimed in Bastide. And Colard, the enemy of wealth, exclaimed, "Oh, they're all like that, these rich men. They think they can do anything." And then, in the words of Bancal, "there was a great silence, during which we all looked at one another, and then at M. Fualdès." Bastide was the first to break the silence. "Come along," he said, "it's time to finish this!" Fualdès asked for his hat. Jausion replied to his request by striking him twice. He was pushed and hustled; there was a struggle, during which the table was upset, and a loaf of bread rolled on to the floor. It was a loaf that Madame Fualdès had that day given to the Bancals. Fualdès recognised the bread; he threw up his hands to heaven and began to cry. Bastide remarked, for the second time, that it was time to have done with the business. Fualdès was laid on the table, Bancal holding his feet. Colard produced his knife. Bancal turned away his head. He heard two low cries, then the blood began to flow, and, as it gurgled on to the floor, he heard a faint voice saying, "Let me say my prayers." "You can say them to the devil in hell," replied Bastide.

M. Fualdès dead, the murderers emptied his pockets of everything they contained. Whilst they were engaged in this occupation Bancal noticed that the curtains of a bed that stood in the room moved slightly. They were drawn aside, and, to the terror of Bancal, disclosed his little daughter Magdeleine, to all appearances asleep. After being sent out of the room by her mother, the child must have crept back unobserved and slipped behind the curtains of the bed. What had she seen or heard? To Bastide the only safe precaution was to add another murder to the night's work, and he offered the parents 500 francs as compensation for their daughter's sacrifice. The mother, who, according to her husband, "always had an eye to the main chance," looked at the father as much as to say, "Well, shall we take it?" "No, never!" cried Bancal, as he caught the little girl to his arms. Then he knew, as she lay in his embrace, that she was feigning sleep, that she must have seen something of the horrid work; but he held his tongue, and set about giving the blood of M. Fualdès, that had been caught up in a bucket, to the pigs to drink. The pigs having done justice to the repast, what was left was thrown into the gutter.

It was now a question of disposing of the body. This was wrapped up in strong cloth and the bundle tightly corded. It only remained to send for Bousquier, who was to carry it to the river. Bastide did not want him to see the bundle before he shouldered it. He accordingly suggested that in the meantime it should be hidden somewhere, and, before the Bancals could stop him, opened the door of the cupboard in which was concealed the lady who had been so suddenly surprised by the approach of the murderers. "We are lost!" cried Bastide as he dragged out the trembling woman. "I have seen nothing, know nothing," stammered out the fearful lady. There was a hurried consultation of the leaders of the enterprise in a corner of the room, as to what means they should

take to ensure their safety. Bastide and Colard were for the lady's death, but Jausion would not hear of it; if they touched a hair of her head, he said, they would have to reckon with him; he had had enough of assassination for one night. Bach suggested that she should be compelled to take an oath. Bastide, though he had little faith in mere words, agreed to administer it, which he did in such awful tones that even the assassins were struck with terror. "Listen, madame," he said, his voice rising and growing deeper and more impressive as he reached the end, "if you speak of what you have seen, be it by steel or by poison, by water or by fire, you shall surely die!" Overcome by the hideousness of the situation—and it must be allowed that, apart from Bastide's melodrama, the scene was a sufficiently ghastly one, the dim and sordid kitchen, the bloody thing that lay stretched upon the table—the horror-stricken lady fainted away. As soon as she had partially recovered, Jausion led her into the street and sent her about her business.

Shortly after this untoward incident Bousquier arrived, and the remains of M. Fualdès were consigned to the river in the manner already described.

Such was the substance of Bancal's death-bed confession. On the day following it he expired. There is no reason to seriously impugn its accuracy; he could at the time have had no motive for misleading his auditors, and having some heart, the unfortunate man was, at the time of his death, sincerely contrite for his share in the foul proceeding. The only matter in regard to the actual commission of the crime that remained to be cleared up was the question of motive. What motive or motives could have been powerful enough to impel men of the standing and position of Bastide and Jausion to be the perpetrators of so atrocious a murder? What had Fualdès done to deserve such treatment at their hands? The second question can be answered shortly. No serious, no justifiable

cause for resentment or revenge on the part of Bastide and Jausion was ever made out against the murdered man; had there been any such cause the murderers would have assuredly revealed it in their own interests.

There was certainly a story to the effect that Fualdès, some eight years before the crime, had in his judicial capacity used his influence to save Jausion from the consequences of an intrigue which he had carried on with the young wife of an old and infirm cloth merchant of Rodez. The circumstances attending the birth of a child, of which Jausion was presumably the father, had brought the unfortunate lady to the bar of the Assize Court, charged with the murder of her infant. But a sympathetic jury acquitted her, and the name of Jausion had never been mentioned in the course of the proceedings, a favour shown to him, it was said, in consequence of his friendship with the magistrate, Fualdès. After the murder, rumour noised it abroad that in a moment of anger Fualdès had threatened to revive the scandal and so compromise publicly the reputation of the now precise and respectable banker, who, in fear of such an exposure, had been driven to put his relative beyond the chance of doing him such an injury. But there is little reason to attach any serious importance to the story as a real factor in the crime. Jausion was anxious, it is true, to conceal or avoid the consequences of misconduct on his part in relation to M. Fualdès; but that misconduct had in it no element of romance. It was not passion that was likely any longer to tempt Jausion to crime; greed and avarice were now the masters of his soul.

Both Bastide and Jausion were under financial obligations to Fualdès. Bastide owed him money, some 10,000 francs. He had no means of paying his debt. Fualdès, on the eve of a final settlement of his affairs, had no doubt become somewhat importunate. Bastide, violent and lawless in character, was in the habit of solving difficulties of

this kind by a resort to force. To liquidate his debt to M. Fualdès by extinguishing the creditor was not such a preposterous solution to Bastide-Gramont as it might appear to more temperate men. With Jausion the case was more serious. If with him the inclination to murder were less, the motive was far stronger. In the course of his business transactions with Fualdès the latter had placed in Jausion's hands a number of blank signatures to be used by Jausion for certain definite purposes. These, however, Jausion had converted to his own use, to raising money for his own benefit. At the time of the murder those bills were becoming due; Fualdès was desirous of regulating all outstanding liabilities; the fraud of Jausion was on the brink of discovery. To extort from the ex-magistrate his signature to papers that would set Jausion right with the holders of the fraudulent bills was the only means by which the latter could hope to save himself from disaster. But those signatures would be valueless if Fualdès survived the violence that in all probability would have to be used to extort them from him. With Bastide at his elbow to urge him on along the path of crime, Jausion screwed his courage to the sticking-point, and embarked on an enterprise in which murder, if not clearly contemplated, was at least a highly probable contingency. To their influential position in Rodez Bastide and Jausion looked for impunity from the consequences of crime. They no doubt hoped, if they did not actually believe, that intimidation would be a powerful weapon in their hands to silence any testimony to their guilt. How vigorously and effectually they exercised it in more than one instance, the sequel will show. Undoubtedly some such confidence on their part goes a long way to explain the rashly daring character of their crime. One must endeavour to realise in some degree the peculiar social conditions of this old-fashioned city, which preserved in its comparative seclusion many of the less desirable

characteristics of bygone periods in the history of France, in order to comprehend the apparently reckless and impudent boldness that accompanied the murder of Fualdès.

At the same time, the cruelty of the murder, the intense animosity towards their victim displayed by both Bastide and Jausion, make it pardonable to ask whether there was not some other cause than pecuniary embarrassment that provoked these two men to kill M. Fualdès. According to the confession of Bancal, both Bastide and Jausion had repeatedly declared to those present at the assassination that it was not for his money that they had murdered the gentleman, and that he, Fualdès, knew perfectly well how thoroughly he deserved his fate. It is given to some men to inspire dislike, just as it is given to others, for reasons difficult to define, to inspire regard. Was there something in Fauldès' way of doing things, his manner of dealing with men, that aggravated to a murderous pitch the evil passions of two men such as Bastide and Jausion, who were not of a class that usually gratify their settled hates by assassination? If there was any cause of irritation other than the financial one, it cannot have been very tangible; had it been, it would in all probability have been pleaded at the trial; but, to explain the extreme atrocity of the crime, it is permissible to indulge in some speculation as to vaguer motives that may have swayed the two principal actors.

With the help of the confession of Bancal, the judicial authorities were ready, at the beginning of May, to send twelve prisoners for trial before the Cour Prévôtale of Rodez. Among them were included the wives of Bastide and Jausion, a sister of Bastide, and the eldest daughter of the Bancals. But the Royal Court at Montpellier issued a decree removing the case from the jurisdiction of the Cour Prévôtale—a peculiar court of unenviable reputation, established during the White Terror to deal with political offences—and ordering a fresh investigation

preparatory to the hearing of the trial by the ordinary Assize Court sitting at Rodez. It was in the midst of this second investigation that an event occurred which gave new life to the excitement caused by the crime, and shifted the interest of the drama from the persons of the principal criminals to that of a woman whose strange vagaries not only attracted universal attention, but prolonged for nearly a year the final settlement of the case.

Ever since the details of Bancal's confession had become known to the public, speculation had been rife as to the identity of the veiled lady who had been hidden in the cupboard of the Bancals' kitchen during the progress of Fualdès murder. Gossip, as not infrequently happens in such cases, made free with the names of various ladies of Rodez as being the actual victims of the misadventure, and even went so far as to name the man for whose sake the lady had found herself so dangerously compromised. It was out of gossip of this kind that the truth at last emerged. A certain respectable young girl, Mlle. Avit, a daughter of the registrar of the Tribunal, had been designated as the veiled lady, and the name of a young gentleman equally blameless coupled with hers. The young man was complaining to some friends in the public room of a hotel of the gross injustice of such scandal, when one of his friends, an officer in the army named Clémandot, endeavoured to reassure him by saying, "Never mind, my good fellow. I know perfectly well that it was not Mlle. Avit." Later in the day Clémandot repeated this statement. The young man, and those with him, insisted that if Clémandot knew the real truth as to the identity of the mysterious lady, it was his duty to disclose it, and so relieve the respectable women of Rodez from the burden of a scandalous suspicion. But the officer was reluctant to speak; to name a lady as having been at the Bancals' house, under any circumstances, was to blast her reputation. However, he gave a half-promise that he would do

something towards elucidating the mystery. A few hours later Clémandot found himself summoned into the presence of the Comte d'Estourmel, the Prefect of the Department. "You must tell me everything," said the Prefect; "you cannot in honour keep silence any longer." Clémandot replied by a statement to the effect that Madame Manzon, a lady of good family but easy reputation, well known in Rodez, had herself confessed to him that it was she who had been surprised in a rendezvous at the Bancals' house by the assassins of Fualdès.

Hitherto the elements of romance, of sensibility—to use a word much in vogue at the period—of emotion, have been strangely lacking from this great *cause célèbre*. But with the appearance of Madame Manzon all these more feminine qualities are brought into play, tending to relieve the mere horror of the crime, and giving to French justice an opportunity of displaying all those arts of pressure, persuasion, and intimidation that it knows so well how to employ in their most striking and sensational form towards an unwilling witness or a prisoner who obstinately denies his guilt.

Madame Manzon was admirably fitted, both by nature and circumstance, to be the heroine of a *cause célèbre*. The daughter of M. Enjalran, one of the judges of the Tribunal of Rodez, she had fallen away from the respectable surroundings in which she had been brought up, and occupied at the time of the murder the rather equivocal position of a woman separated from her husband and reputed to be lively, sentimental, and indulgent. Fortune had not been very kind to her. At an early age she had been married to a man she did not love; she took him as her husband, to use her own words, "as one takes a pill." And all the time her thoughts were elsewhere; for there was a bright and lively young fellow, a "little sportsman" of quick wit and nice appreciation, who had won her heart, and was daily contrasted with the kindly

and well-meaning but insufferably dull and unattractive husband. After three months of married life M. and Madame Manzon separated, she going to live at a little farmhouse in the country. There the still devoted husband made an attempt to gain the affection of his wife in a manner that for a time, at any rate, appealed to the "sensibility" of the lady. Like some Troubadour of old, the excellent gentleman appeared at night under her window, twanged a mandoline, and sent her mysterious baskets of flowers which concealed gifts of various kinds. The masquerade was successful. Charmed by the eccentricity of the situation, Madame Manzon once more admitted her husband to her chamber, and as a burlesque Romeo he obtained what was denied to homely affection. However, the birth of a child soon scattered the factitious setting of pseudo-romance, and the ill-assorted couple parted for good.

Madame Manzon returned to Rodez, a city she despised. Its inhabitants, to her thinking, had no heart; they were little better than stupid machines. Being in no temper to conform to their ways of living, she followed those of her own, and soon acquired, among those she despised, a dubious reputation. If the story told by Clémandot were true, and she had really gone to the Bancals' on the night of March 19th to keep an assignation, there were some grounds for the rather questionable character given her by the dullards of Rodez. It was on July 29th that Clémandot made his startling revelation. On the 31st, at the request of her father, the Prefect sent for Madame Manzon and questioned her as to Clémandot's avowal. She promptly gave him the lie, but seemed embarrassed and ill at ease.

On the following day she wrote a letter to the Prefect that betrayed a painful agitation. She was anxious, she wrote, to tell the truth, but wanted the courage to do so: her situation was so difficult, she so lonely in her distress.

"Have I not been born to misfortune? Has not the cup of my unhappiness been filled to the brim?" She came to the Prefect's house and there declared that it was true that she had told Clémandot that she had been at the Bancals' on the night of the murder, but that it was a joke on her part; she had never been there in her life. The Prefect confronted her with Clémandot; her father, who was present, commanded her to speak the truth: "Enough of lies, madame; if you wish to avoid the full current of my wrath, speak the truth. If you have forgotten all other obligations, at least respect that one." The Prefect sent everybody from the room, and once again pressed her, in a kindly manner, to be frank with him. At length Madame Manzon showed signs of wavering; if she spoke, would her father promise not to separate her from her child, and guarantee her an income sufficient to live upon? M. Enjalran, called into the room, promised to accede to her wishes. She then confessed, for the first time, that she had been in the Bancals' kitchen on the night of March 19th, but said she could not identify any of the persons she had seen there. To improve the occasion, and profit by her coming-on disposition, the Prefect straightway took Madame Manzon to the scene of the murder. She had no sooner entered the passage leading to the kitchen than she turned pale, beat her hands together, and fainted away. In the kitchen itself and the courtyard her agitation was no less marked; she begged to be allowed to go. She identified the cupboard in which she had hidden, and, as the recollection of that awful night came more forcibly upon her, her terror showed only too clearly the nature of the scene she had witnessed. Feeling that he had sufficiently harrowed her feelings for one day, the Prefect sent Madame Manzon to her home.

The following day, August 2nd, as a result of the Prefect's judicious measures, Madame Manzon made a formal declaration. In it she stated that she had gone

into the Bancals' house on the night of the murder in order to avoid a crowd in the street. She described how she had hidden in the cupboard, how a man had dragged her out and threatened her with death if she spoke of what she had seen; and she gave the substance of half an hour's conversation she had had in the street with the man who led her from the house. But she could identify no one; she admitted that she had been dressed as a man on the occasion in question, and that she had burnt the clothes because they were blood-stained. The Prefect suggested to her that the blood was the blood of the murdered man, that she had accidentally come into contact with the corpse on the table; but she attributed it to quite another cause: she had knocked her head while she was in the cupboard, and the blow had made her nose bleed. This statement of Madame Manzon was clearly of a very partial character; she had not told all; but the Prefect had every hope that, since she had gone so far in the path of revelation, he would ultimately succeed in getting from her a full and particular account of her nocturnal adventure. But he was doomed to disappointment. Not only was there no more information to be obtained from the lady, but on the very day following her confession she retracted it, denied that she had ever been at the Bancals', and went back to her previous story that it was merely as a joke she had told Clémandot that she had been there.

On August 4th this astounding retraction was solemnly repeated in the presence of the Prefect, her father, and the Procureur du Roi. "In the very sanctuary of justice, in the presence of its honourable ministers, in the presence of God who hears me and shall judge," Madame Manzon declared that never, at any time, had she been in the Bancals' house; that she had not even known that such a house existed, and that she was fully prepared to maintain the truth of this statement to the end of her days. "You have sorely tried our patience and our trust in you," was

the cold comment of the Prefect. But he was only at the beginning of his trials; he had yet to learn what it was to get the truth out of a woman of sensibility. In the meantime it was clear that some powerful cause must have operated to induce Madame Manzon to go back with such resolute determination on what was evidently the true account of her visit to the Bancals'. That cause was intimidation. Since her first interview with the Prefect she had been visited by Madame Pons, a sister of Bastide, and there can be no doubt that the object of that visit had been to put such pressure on Madame Manzon, such fear into her heart, as should compel her, for her own safety's sake, to do her utmost to save the heads of Bastide and Jausion. Already intimidation had been practised in Rodez by members of these two influential families, and it was not likely that a weak and vain woman, capable of giving fatal testimony, would escape their efforts. The authorities, too, had played into their hands. At the first sign of wavering they should have placed Madame Manzon under arrest, charged her with having been an accomplice in the crime, and so secured her against the threats and inducements of the relatives of the prisoners. But the favour she enjoyed as the daughter of a respected magistrate, the consideration shown to her by the Prefect, the freedom allowed her up to the time of the trial, exposed her to the influence of Madame Pons, left her free to the indulgence of the emotional element in her composition, and gave her an opportunity of tasting the sweets of notoriety. Terror of the vengeance threatened by the relatives of Bastide, a feeling of gratitude towards Jausion, who had undoubtedly saved her life on the fatal night, shame at having to admit her presence in a house of ill repute, the attraction of finding herself the centre of a highly dramatic and poignant situation—all these motives united in the troubled breast of Madame Manzon to make perjury almost a necessity.

But, having made up her mind to lie, Madame Manzon was neither robust nor wicked enough to emulate worthily the achievements of an Oates or a Bedloe. Her tortured conscience betrayed itself in a series of letters with which, during the fortnight previous to the trial of the case, she bombarded the too amiable Prefect. In these letters, and in the interviews to which they led, she acknowledged that she had a secret, and promised to one day divulge it; at times she seemed to hover on the brink of yet another confession, but only to draw back and take refuge in vague hints, entreaties, fantastic tales. She was a poor weak woman, she wrote, no Machiavelli; she was on the edge of a precipice; the whole world was against her, a world that knew nothing of her true character; her nights were horrible; her child, that slept peacefully by her side, would soon be taken from her; and so on, in a confused medley of conflicting emotions. All this time, and to the knowledge of the Prefect, she was receiving visits from Madame Pons and others interested in the fate of Bastide and Jausion. It was not likely, therefore, that, exposed to these sinister influences, Madame Manzon would escape from the web of falsehood in which she had involved herself. The magistrates, victims of their own mistaken indulgence, had now to trust to the gravity and authority of the Assize Court to fix Madame "Mensonge," as she was playfully termed, to the truth.

On August 18th, 1817, eleven prisoners stood in the dock before the Assize Court of Rodez, charged with being concerned in various degrees in the murder of M. Fualdès. These were Bastide and Jausion, Bastide's two sisters, Madame Jausion and Madame Galtier, the woman Bancal and her eldest daughter, Marianne, Colard and his mistress, Anne Benoit, Bach, Bousquier and Missonier. Of the two principal actors in the crime, Jausion, as he entered the court, seemed restless and depressed, but Bastide bore himself with hardy insolence.

The leading advocate for the defence was M. Romiguières, a distinguished representative of the bar of Toulouse. The son of Fualdès was present in his capacity of "partie civile," not in this instance to claim any pecuniary compensation for the loss of his father, but to import into the proceedings an inconvenient, if comprehensible, element of personal vindictiveness that could be of little assistance to justice. The jury had been carefully chosen from among men holding prominent positions in and about Rodez.

In describing a case the hearing of which lasted nearly a month and in which three hundred and twenty witnesses were examined, it is necessary to select those points that are new and of salient interest, and avoid such evidence as merely repeats the story that has been already told.

The great body of the evidence, as it affected Bastide and Jausion, added little to the ample details given in Bancal's informal confession. The prisoner Bousquier fully admitted his share in the business, told of his horror when he discovered the real character of the bale of tobacco that he had been hired to carry, and identified Bastide as one of those present, but was less positive as to Jausion. Many witnesses deposed to the involuntary admissions made by the two little children of the Bancals'; many also deposed to the intimidation exercised in Rodez by the friends of the prisoners towards those capable of giving evidence against them; two daring attempts made previous to the trial to effect the escape of Bastide and Jausion by corrupting their gaolers, bore plain testimony to the determined and daring efforts of their families to cheat justice of her prey. The comings and goings of the two men before and after the murder, their financial relations with the murdered man, the admissions made by the woman Bancal to some fellow prisoners; all these circumstances told heavily against the innocence of the majority of the prisoners. One of those trivial pieces of

evidence that astonish the English reader at their finding a place in a grave judicial investigation, provoked a sneer from the redoubtable Bastide. A Professor was called who had met Bastide about two o'clock on the afternoon preceding the crime. His appearance was so distraught that the Professor could not help exclaiming to a friend who was with him, "That man looks a villain!" "But he's a man of very good family," expostulated the friend. "Never mind that," replied the Professor, "he's got an evil face." "Permit me to congratulate the department," sneered Bastide at the conclusion of this remarkable evidence, "on being able to reckon among its professors so striking a physiognomist."

It was not until the fifth day of the trial that public expectation was gratified by the appearance of Madame Manzon in the witness-box. This event was the signal for a display of emotion and excitement on the part of all concerned, rarely, if ever, equalled in the records of the French Assize Courts. The President greeted the witness as "an angel sent by Providence to clear up a dreadful mystery." But when he invited Madame Manzon to fulfil this august mission, she fainted away and had to be carried from the court. On her return, to the disappointment of of the judge, she denied that she had ever been in the house of the Bancals, but said that she had heard that there had been a woman there on the night of the murder whom Bastide had wished to kill but Jausion had preserved from death. The utmost efforts of the President, and of the young Fualdès, could wring nothing more from her. In vain the former exhorted her, as the daughter of a magistrate, to speak the truth; her only answer was to faint away a second time. In vain was a row of soldiers placed between her and the prisoners, to protect her from intimidation; in vain was she confronted with her lover, Clémandot, and other witnesses to whom she had spoken at different times of her unlucky adventure in the Bancals'

house. Madame Manzon, though she did not hesitate to address the prisoners as assassins, persisted in denying that she had any knowledge of the murder except such as she had learnt from hearsay, or the many anonymous letters with which she had been deluged; whatever she may have said before was false: she was now speaking the truth. No one believed her: but all arts were powerless to shake her resolution to lie. The gallant Clémandot felt that her denials reflected so seriously on his character, that he twice offered to explain to the court the exact nature of his relations with Madame Manzon; this, he declared, would place the truth of his statements beyond question; but the President, to the intense disappointment of the audience, declined to receive the information. M. Romiguières, in defending Bastide, made a daring appeal to her to speak the whole truth. "The contradictions, inconsistencies, half admissions in your evidence, your obvious terror, tell far more heavily against the prisoners than any definite accusation. It would be far better for all that you should speak the whole truth. What is there to prevent you? I ask you, in the name of the prisoners, what have you to fear from them? They are in the dock——" "No! no!" cried Madame Manzon, "they are not all in the dock; there are others!"

At this startling announcement the general excitement reached fever heat; the formidable Bastide, the only one of the prisoners who in any degree dominated the proceedings, became so terrible and threatening that the officer commanding the soldiers guarding the precincts of the court ordered his men to present arms.

The following day the President made a last attempt to persuade Madame Manzon to recant. He felt, no doubt, that he had been premature, if not presumptuous, in greeting her in the first instance as a heaven-sent angel of truth. He apologised for his ill-judged enthusiasm by explaining that though God had given to men all they

required to make them happy, He had denied them the power to penetrate the secrets of eternity : " I don't think anybody can imagine for one moment that I sought to lift the impenetrable veil that wisely shrouds from us the mysterious designs of Providence." He then exhorted Madame Manzon, in the name of her parents, to tell the truth. Her only answer was to try to shift the responsibility for her original statements on to a young lady named Pierret, from whom she said she had learnt the details of the murder. The young lady was called and denied emphatically that she had ever had any conversation of any kind with Madame Manzon on the subject of the crime. The President, his patience exhausted, began to threaten. " Remember," he said, addressing Madame Manzon, " you are a witness now ; you may be a prisoner later." " I know that," she replied ; " you can arrest me if you like. But I was never at the Bancals', and I am ready to suffer for the woman who was." At this point the young Fualdès rose, and told the President that he had that moment been informed that the woman Bancal was ready to aver that it was indeed Madame Manzon who had been discovered in her closet by the murderers. The gendarme, sitting by her side in the dock, told the court that, while Madame Manzon was giving her evidence, he had heard the prisoner Bancal mutter, " She may say what she likes, she was there." But Bancal declined to be drawn into any definite admissions.

The attempt to make Madame Manzon tell her real story had failed egregiously. The intimidation practised by the relatives of Bastide, her gratitude to Jausion, the reluctance to avow her own indiscretion, and the indulgence hitherto extended to her by the authorities, had all contributed to the suppression of the truth. A rigorous cross-examination after the English fashion, a sterner and less sentimental attitude on the part of the presiding judge, might have swayed her resolution ; but her treat-

ment at the trial was not of a character to do that. If she had been arrested before instead of after the trial the result might have been different.

In any case her reticence did not avail those chiefly concerned. On September 12th the jury returned a verdict of "Guilty" in varying degree against all the prisoners with the exception of Bastide's two sisters, Madame Galtier and Madame Jausion, and Marianne Bancal. Bastide, Jausion, Bach, Colard, and the woman Bancal were sentenced to death, Missonier and Annie Benoit to imprisonment for life, and Bousquier to one year's imprisonment and a trifling fine. Jausion was crushed by the weight of his condemnation; but the redoubtable Bastide rose to the occasion. "There are hearts in this court," he said, "that are beating quicker than mine." The woman Benoit, Colard's mistress, paid no attention to her own sentence, but reproached herself with having brought about her lover's fate by persuading him to stay in Rodez.

But they were not to die yet. Whether from carelessness or over-excitement, the President at Rodez had committed so many irregularities in the conduct of the trial, chiefly in the swearing of the witnesses, which in France, as in Scotland, is entrusted to the presiding judge, that in October the Court of Cassation quashed the whole proceedings and directed a new trial before the Assize Court for the Tarn department, sitting at Albi. In the meantime Madame Manzon had been arrested on a charge of perjury and imprisoned in a convent.

Her confinement was, however, of the most indulgent character. She was allowed to receive as many visitors as she pleased; nor was she separated from her little boy, whom she described as "her little palladium, her Allah, her idol." She was now to taste to the full the sweets of notoriety. An enterprising and unscrupulous Parisian journalist, by name de la Touche, scented lucrative "copy" in the imprisoned heroine of a *cause célèbre*; he

visited her in her convent prison and for 2,400 francs purchased the right to publish a volume of *Memoirs* setting forth the story of her married life and her connection with Fualdès. It was a good bargain, for out of the sale of the book de la Touche was enabled to buy himself a charming villa in the country. Paris had become interested in the strange stories that reached the capital from Rodez, in the sentimental lady so mysteriously involved in a brutal and sordid crime, in her extraordinary attitude, her constant admissions and retractions.

In her *Memoirs* Madame Manzon continued to deny her presence in the Bancals' kitchen on the night of the murder, and to insist that it was from Rose Pierret that she had learned all she knew of the circumstances of the crime. But in her narrative of her married life, and her relations with Clémandot, she broke new ground, and amused the curious public. We have already alluded to her account of her unhappy marriage with the unsympathetic Manzon, the worthy citizen of Bœotian Rodez, a city filled not with men, but with automata and machines. She dealt in these *Memoirs* no less severely with Clémandot, whose indiscretion had first revealed her awkward secret. He was a young fool who had bored her by his persistent attentions; he had been in the habit of calling at her house slightly intoxicated, and sitting there till she was at her wit's end how to get rid of him; and it was on one of these occasions that, to pass the time and evade his silly questions, she had pretended, as a joke, to have been the woman, the unwilling witness of Fualdès' murder.

The gallantry of Clémandot was not proof against this most uncomplimentary account of his relations with Madame Manzon; he could not refrain from a reply. He had already been threatened with the loss of his commission and a duel with one of Madame Manzon's brothers, and had not been allowed to tell all his story in the Assize

Court. Since memoirs were in the air, there was nothing left him but to publish his own. According to his story, he had known Madame Manzon for three days when, on July 28th, she, after some beating about the bush, told him that on the night of the murder she had gone to the Bancals' house to meet "a young man from the country," and had been surprised there by the assassins of Fualdès. As to his brief relations with Madame Manzon, Clémandot declared them to have been perfectly innocent; he would have said so at the trial, and so put an end to all uncharitable surmise, had he been permitted. The reason why Madame Manzon had endeavoured to involve Rose Pierret in her adventure was, Clémandot suggested, the girl's prettiness, an unforgivable crime in another woman in the eyes of Madame Manzon. But the cruellest cut of all was contained in the following passage from these *Memoirs*: "I was first attracted to Madame Manzon by her plainness. I was told she was bright and amusing, and, though it required an effort to get over her yellow skin, her small eyes, large mouth and masculine voice, I gradually came to find her tolerable. I enjoyed her conversation; we talked together, and there, thank God, it ended."

Clémandot's retort is unchivalrous, but to have been described publicly as a tedious bore who lolls about in a lady's drawing-room in a state of somnolent inebriety was, even if it were true, provoking.

As the time of the second trial drew nearer, memoirs fell thick and fast; witnesses wrote memoirs; Madame Manzon wrote additional *Memoirs*, reflecting on her first, which she said had been wheedled out of her by unscrupulous arts. De la Touche replied by revealing a number of scandalous details which he had suppressed in the original *Memoirs* out of consideration for their author. In the meantime Madame Manzon continued to be treated with every possible consideration; she wrote letters to the

newspapers and received her visitors; her arrival at Albi partook more of the nature of a triumphal entry than that of a prisoner awaiting trial. At Albi the prosecution had decided to place her in the dock by the side of the other prisoners, charged with having "aided and abetted the authors of the crime either before or after the fact." It was hoped that, by placing her in this unpleasant situation, she might be induced to speak the truth. The proceedings before the Albi Assize Court, which opened on March 25th, 1818, were far more decisive in their character than those at Rodez. Tongues that had been previously tied, from a variety of causes, were now loosed. Many who had been afraid to speak at the first trial for fear lest certain of the accused, if acquitted, might wreak vengeance on them, now that the dreaded ones had been once convicted, plucked up courage to come forward. One of the prisoners, condemned to death at Rodez, in the hope of meeting with an easier fate at Albi, had made a partial confession. The trial itself was conducted with greater firmness and decision than that of the year before, with on the whole satisfactory results.

No evidence that could tell against the prisoners was deemed too indirect, or, strictly speaking, irrelevant, to be urged against them. A witness stated that a woman with whom Bastide lodged had replied to him very evasively when he asked her whether Bastide was at her house on the night of March 19th, 1817. Bastide, in reply, said that this woman had died, but, in dying, had made a declaration which he wished to have read. "Yes," said the President, "I know very well she is dead, and that her death followed on an attack of violent sickness." A young advocate, not engaged in the case, rose and protested against the absurd rumours circulated about this woman's death. "I have official information on the subject," answered the judge.

As the court did not think it right that the little girl,

Magdeleine Bancal, should be called to give evidence against her mother, a gentleman named de Lorme, occupying no official position, was allowed to give the substance of a statement made by the child to himself and five other persons in the hospital to which she had been removed. According to this, Jausion dealt Fualdès the first blow, but recoiled in horror, whereupon Bastide and Missonier finished him off. Madame Manzon, after her discovery in the closet, had been compelled to place her hand on the belly of the corpse. The following morning her mother sent the little girl to her father, who was working in the fields. She was to take him his dinner and tell her father, so her mother enjoined her, "to do he knew what." The child found Bancal digging a hole; she was frightened, believing, after the events of the previous night, that it was intended for her; but her father soon reassured her. Sobbing, he took her in his arms and said, "No. Promise me always to be a good girl, and run away!" The hole he had dug was afterwards used for the interment of the two pigs which, having been given the blood of Fualdès to drink, had perished from the horrid draught.

A witness named Garribal repeated what he had heard from a female servant of Jausion the day after the murder. The woman said that, on the morning of the 20th, Jausion had come into his wife's room and said, "Victoire, we are lost; he floats!" Another witness deposed to a remark made by Bastide on the same day. A few years before the murder of Fualdès, Bastide's eldest son had been killed in the course of a brawl; Fualdès, then Procureur Impérial, had prosecuted his assailants, but, in the opinion of his father, without sufficient zeal. Bastide, who had not forgotten nor forgiven this, said to the witness on one occasion, "I have plenty of children, but none of them can work. If my eldest son were alive, he would have helped me. The judges were very unwilling to punish his murderer; I'll pay them out."

The evidence of a man named Théron was more conclusive in its character. He swore positively to having seen, from behind a bush, Bastide, Jausion, Bach, Colard, and Bancal, carrying the corpse of a man in the direction of the Aveyron river on the night of March 19th ; he was positive in his identification of the prisoners. Asked by the President why he had not given his evidence at Rodez, he answered : "Bastide, when first arrested, had been released for a while ; I was afraid he might get out of prison again and serve me as he had served M. Fualdès. But I told M. Anglade, the doctor, at the time that 'my best friend' knew all about the murder, and as I meant myself by my 'best friend,' I thought he might guess that it was I who knew all about it."

By placing Madame Manzon in the dock the prosecution attained their end, in a measure. She now admitted her presence in the Bancals' kitchen. From her concealment she had heard cries and moans and the noise of the blood running into the bucket ; she had tried in vain to get out by the little window of the closet, but had only succeeded in making her nose bleed. When she was brought out, her terror was so great that she had no recollection of what or whom she had seen ; she only remembered being taken into the street by a man whom she was unable to identify, and there sent about her business. More than this she could not, or would not say ; she was utterly unable, she said, to identify any of her companions in the dock as having been present in the kitchen on that awful night. And it would have been well for at least one of them had she been left alone at that point in her story. A gentleman had been called who swore that Madame Manzon had told him, before the first trial, that she had given evidence to the authorities that would send those accused of the murder to the scaffold. Judge, advocates, the witness himself, pressed her to admit the truth of this statement, but in vain ; at length Bastide himself inter-

vened. "If she would only tell the truth!" he exclaimed. Madame Manzon turned on him, and, with a strangely significant look, apostrophised him as "Wretch!" "Come, no more monosyllables, madame!" replied Bastide; but the words were hardly out of his mouth when Madame, pushing aside the two gendarmes who interposed between them, confronted her fellow-prisoner. "Look well at me, Bastide," she cried; "don't you know me again?" "No," was the answer, "I don't know you." "Wretch, you say you don't know me, you who would have cut my throat!" and Madame Manzon fell fainting in the dock. For the redoubtable Bastide this was a fatal blow. From the first Madame Manzon had betrayed a marked antipathy to the man who had, according to her original story, proposed to add her murder to that of Fualdès. This significant incident left little doubt of the truth of that story.

No sooner had she recovered from the agitation into which she had been thrown by her passage with Bastide, than the young Fualdès strove with all his might to persuade her to identify Jausion as the man who had combated Bastide's bloodthirsty suggestion, but without result. The following day the President renewed the attack, but with little better success; the utmost that could be wrung from Madame Manzon was the statement, "I can neither save nor convict Jausion." Bastide made a final effort to discount the weight of her damning testimony against himself. "These exclamations are worth nothing," he protested, "we are not in a theatre. Madame Manzon has been entertaining the public too long. What is the meaning of these dramatic outbursts?" "Stop, prisoner," said the President, "why do you call the dock in which you are seated a theatre? If it be true that you wanted to murder Madame Manzon, can you expect she should speak of it with perfect self-command? Don't deceive yourself, Bastide; this is no comedy." "My God, no!" he answered. "I should think not!

It's a cruel tragedy for a man whose conscience is as clear as mine!" "Your conscience clear!" exclaimed Madame Manzon, with energy. "If M. Bastide can prove his innocence, I will mount the scaffold in his stead!" It was useless for Bastide to urge that the woman had said one thing at Rodez, another at Albi. "I lied at Rodez," was the calm retort, "I am telling the truth at Albi."

But nothing could induce Madame Manzon to swear away the life of Jausion, the man who had saved her own. One of the judges pointed out to her how much better it would be for Jausion if she would only speak out, but she was resolute. "I cannot speak conclusively," she answered, "in respect to him."

But her reticence was powerless to save Jausion from his fate. Not only had the evidence of Théron added very materially to the weight of the testimony against him, but the confessions made by Bach and the woman Bancal in the course of the trial, which fully corroborated the informal but seemingly trustworthy statement made by the latter's husband on his death-bed, furnished conclusive evidence of his presence and active participation in his kinsman's murder. According to these confessions, there had been at least two other persons present at the murder in addition to those who were standing in the dock—one a brother of Bastide, another a man by the name of Yence.

It was not until the end of April that the speeches of counsel were commenced. Whether as a protest against the attitude of the judges, or for some other reason, Bastide's advocate declined to address the jury himself, but furnished his client with a carefully prepared speech, which, after the manner of Thurtell, with whom Bastide has some points of likeness, the prisoner declaimed to his judges. This elegant oration was greatly admired at the time; the King, Louis XVIII., read it over twice, and the Academy deliberated as to whether it was not worthy

to be crowned as a model of forensic eloquence. But its effect in court would seem to have been less remarkable, as may be expected from the artificial character of its delivery. Bastide was thundering away from his manuscript about the "snares employed to persuade such vile creatures as Bach and the woman Bancal to save their miserable lives by perjuring themselves," when the President asked, "What snares have been employed? Tell us all about them." But, as they were not in the manuscript, Bastide was obliged to go lamely on to the next passage. Again, he was attacking Madame Manzon: "My defence against her," he said, "this woman who is at the same time witness, accused, and accuser, whom the prosecution alternately censure and caress, pitilessly disgrace or egregiously exalt, this woman who, to avoid being disgraced by the law, forces the law to disgrace itself ——" Here the President interrupted him. "Bastide," he asked, is this written defence you are reading your own com position?" "The ideas are my own," answered the prisoner. "Well," replied the judge, "I should advise you to think before you add to your guilt or aggravate the public resentment." The address ended by an appeal to the future, which, said Bastide, however the present trial might end, would one day engrave on his tomb the words, "He died innocent."

On May 4th, after a trial lasting thirty-four days, and more than thirteen months after the murder of Fualdès, the jury convicted all the prisoners, with the exception of Madame Manzon, of having participated in varying degree in the crime of March 19th, 1817. Bastide, Jausion, Colard, Bach, and the woman Bancal were, as at the previous trial, condemned to death, Anne Benoit to imprisonment for life, and Missonier to two years' imprisonment and a small fine. This Missonier, who seems to have been little better than an idiot, was the only one of the prisoners to profit by a second trial, for at

Rodez he had been sentenced to imprisonment for life. Jausion, a coward by nature, was as overcome by this second condemnation as Bastide was to all appearances still defiant. The former cried out against his fate; he was innocent, they wanted to take his money from him; it would kill his children; he adjured Bach to say that he was not in the Bancals' kitchen that night. "You were there," was the only answer. The sentences on Bach and la Bancal were not carried out, but Jausion, Bastide, and Colard, after vainly appealing once again to the Court of Cassation, were guillotined at Rodez on June 3rd. Even the stout heart of Bastide failed him at the supreme moment; but not one of the three confessed their guilt. Three other persons implicated in the confessions of Bach and la Bancal, as having been present at the murder, were subsequently put on their trial, but were acquitted; justice, satisfied with the punishment of the principals in the tragedy, did not inquire too curiously into the relative guilt of the subordinate actors.

Some thirteen years after the execution of the murderers, a sinister discovery furnished grim proof of the good fortune of Madame Manzon and the little Magdeleine Bancal in not paying with their lives for their accidental presence at Fualdès' assassination. In 1841, in a garden that at the time of the murder had belonged to Jausion, there were found two skeletons, and by their side the rotting keyboards of two hurdy-gurdies. These were, in all probability, the remains of those two itinerant musicians who had played their instruments with such notable vigour on the fatal night, but of whom the magistrates had never been able to find any trace. In their cases Bastide had evidently pursued to its logical conclusion that system of making assurance doubly sure, which only the inadequate villainy of Jausion had prevented him from carrying out in the instances of Madame Manzon and the little girl. Of these two, the child, deprived of all pro-

tection, drifted ultimately into that class to which the melancholy surroundings of her childhood may be said to have predestined her; while Madame Manzon, after having for a brief space been "run" by an enterprising showman, retired shortly after on a Government pension, conferred on her by the Duc Décazes, presumably as a solace for her trials, or a reward for her heroic efforts to suppress the truth.

The murder of the luckless Fualdès is worthy to rank as a famous *cause célèbre*, firstly for the audacity of the crime itself, and secondly for the strange mischance which involved a vain and hysterical woman in the circumstances of its investigation. Both the intimidation of witnesses, which was practised to such an outrageous extent by the relatives and friends of the principal criminals, and the protracted lying of Madame Manzon, might have been rendered far less serious in their results had the authorities, immediately after the crime, acted with greater firmness. As it was, the social position of Jausion and Bastide, which made their crime difficult of belief, and the relationship of Madame Manzon to a highly respected magistrate, which procured her at the first peculiar indulgence, must be held in great part accountable for the length of time that elapsed between the arrest and execution of the murderers, and the sensational, if unsatisfactory, character of the first trial.

The Early Life of Chief Justice Scroggs

THE EARLY LIFE OF CHIEF JUSTICE SCROGGS

The career of Sir William Scroggs after his appointment as Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench is a part of the history of his time, the history of the Popish Plot, and the trials arising out of it. In his conduct of those trials he has contrived to acquire a reputation for judicial villainy second only to that of Chief Justice Jeffreys. Historians have crushed him with a load of obloquy and denunciation, light only in comparison with that accorded to the peerless Jeffreys. Recent writers, chief among them Sir James Stephen, have relieved his judicial conduct of some measure of its apparently wanton guilt; but his behaviour on the bench must always remain a flagrant example of judicial intemperance, a failing by no means extinct, but in these less passionate days exercised in comparatively harmless circumstances, not, as in Scroggs's case, tempted to display itself in an hour of public panic, agitation, and suspicion, unexampled in our history. How Chief Justice Scroggs came to lose so dismally his self-control, when confronted with the wild excitement of the Plot agitation, a brief study of his early life, for which in recent times some interesting materials have come to light, may serve at least partially to explain.

The author of a Latin panegyric on Chief Justice Scroggs tells us how that, at the birth of the future judge, there was strife in heaven, Venus, Mars, and Mercury each contending for the privilege of acting as tutelary genius to the helpless

infant, and how that Jove, intervening, accommodated the dispute by deciding that each of the three should be allowed to bestow a characteristic gift on the little Scroggs, which should stand him in good stead through life, and give the bestower an interest in his fortunes. In consequence of this decision, Venus blessed him with a comely presence, Mars with a soldier's courage, and Mercury bestowed on him the gift of graceful and pungent eloquence. Whatever the degree of credit attaching to this poet's vision of celestial interference in the destinies of Scroggs, it is certain that a fine appearance, martial ardour, and remarkable eloquence were conspicuous among the innate advantages which nature had conferred on him, as means whereby to push his fortunes in troublous times.

Two advantages, however, the gods had withheld from Scroggs at his birth—illustrious parentage and a sweet-sounding name. It may be at once conceded that there is no name imaginable more unlovely in its sound than that of Scroggs. If the name was originally derived from the provincial word "scrog," signifying something shrivelled or stunted, and had been in the first instance applied to the Scroggs family owing to their poverty of stature, the name had lost its significance by the time it came down to the Chief Justice. His fine physique was a notable feature of his personal appearance. In considering the parentage of Scroggs his biographer is confronted at the outset with Sir William Dugdale's assertion that he was a Smithfield butcher's son; that his father had only one eye; that his mother was large, fat, and red-nosed; and that Scroggs himself, seemingly as a consequence of this unpropitious origin, was a very ill-humoured man, who never paid his tithes. Anthony Wood declares that, on his knighthood, Scroggs had refused to pay the customary fees to the College of Arms, of which Dugdale was a prominent member; and therefore Dugdale's statement is to be received with caution. But Wood, who seems to have been well

acquainted with Scroggs, offers no other account. If Dugdale's version is a little highly coloured for the reason Wood suggests—and a herald would be naturally sensitive to such an omission as Scroggs is said to have been guilty of—it is at any rate more than probable that Scroggs' immediate origin was very humble. When, in 1637, he entered Oriel College, Oxford, he was described as "of Deddington, plebs;" this Deddington was a market town of Oxfordshire, pleasantly nicknamed "drunken Deddington," for the excellence of the malt liquor brewed there. In after life, when he had risen to eminence, Scroggs would seem to have been at some pains to establish his relationship to a family of Scroggs that in the sixteenth century had, by a marriage with an heiress, come into possession of a considerable estate at Albury in Hertfordshire; and the family would seem to have been ready to acknowledge the connection, though there was some doubt as to the precise link uniting them.

Whatever the trade or business of Scroggs's father, it had been at any rate a successful one, for it enabled him to send his son to Oxford, with a view to his entering the Church. In the May of 1637, Scroggs, then sixteen years of age, matriculated at Oriel College, which he afterwards quitted for Pembroke. In January, 1640, he took his Bachelor's degree, and, abandoning a clerical for a legal career, was admitted a student of Gray's Inn in the following year. His father had in the meantime left Deddington and gone to live in Essex, for, in the register of Gray's Inn, Scroggs is described as a gentleman of Stifford in that county. Essex was henceforth to be the home of Scroggs. A few miles north of Stifford lies South Weald, where he subsequently purchased Weald Hall, and it is in South Weald church that he lies buried. In June, 1643, he took his degree as Master of Arts. The Civil War had broken out, and Oxford was now the headquarters of the Royal cause. For ten years, until his call to the Bar in 1653, Scroggs's

studies must have been considerably interrupted by that element of Mars that was in him, and prompted him to take up arms on behalf of his sovereign. Whether he formed part of the contingents that the University supplied to the royal army during the first Civil War it is impossible to determine. But when the second Civil War broke out in 1648, it is certain that Scroggs fought and suffered along with some of the most gallant of the Cavalier soldiers. Wood says that he was captain of a company of foot in that honourable, though unfortunate, expedition of Kent, Essex, and Colchester; and the Latin panegyrist, already quoted, describes him as fighting "Colcestrensi agro." He most probably joined the expedition when Lord Norwich and his defeated army abandoned Kent and joined the force which that brave and skilful general, Sir Charles Lucas, had raised in his own county of Essex. Scroggs was severely wounded, presumably at the ensuing siege of Colchester, when the Royalist force, shut up in the town, held out for two months against the Parliamentary army under Fairfax. So serious were his wounds that, after the Restoration, he was obliged to plead them as an excuse for not taking part in certain civic ceremonies, in which, as one of the counsel for the City of London, he should have participated. Scroggs's name is not included in the list of those colonels and captains of the Royalist force who were made prisoners when Colchester surrendered to Fairfax at the end of August; but he may have been one of the seventy-two lieutenants, or sixty-nine ensigns, whose names are not set out. In that case he probably suffered a short imprisonment, or was given, with other gentlemen serving in the army, to Fairfax's officers, who kept them in their custody till their friends were willing to pay a substantial ransom to obtain their liberty.

Scroggs possessed many qualifications calculated to make him shine as a warrior in the King's army. A handsome presence, boldness and address, undaunted courage, very

excellent and nimble parts: these were advantages that, coupled with a good education, and, in all probability, a full purse, must have gone far to make men forget the obscurity of his birth. Nor would the fact that Scroggs was no debtor to the bottle, but rather a passionate devotee, be likely to detract from his charms in the eyes of some of the King's bravest followers. It is to this period of his career that we may fairly ascribe the intimate friendship, ultimately confirmed by inter-marriage, that existed between Scroggs and the Hatton family, a friendship to which we owe a very vivid glimpse of, at any rate, one aspect of the future judge's character. It would be interesting to know for certain whether Scroggs's connection with the family originated in an acquaintance with the first or the second Lord Hatton. When the King made Oxford his capital, the first Lord Hatton was with him as Comptroller of his Household. He would have been then about thirty-eight, Scroggs twenty. Hatton, who had just been made a peer, was at that time a person of great reputation among the King's advisers. This reputation he contrived, before his death in 1670, to dissipate utterly. Exile, which followed on the overthrow of Charles I., demoralised him. He returned to England, at the Restoration, a selfish old voluptuary. While his family starved and pinched at Kirby on such meagre allowances as he was pleased to send them, the old lord lived in Scotland Yard, and amused himself with low company. But he did not entirely neglect to exercise his brilliant and once promising intellect. Whilst his wife was living on plum-cake and pie, supplied by the pity of her neighbours, and his debts were unpaid, the religious world was edified by an edition of the Psalms, each prefaced with a suitable and original prayer composed by the Lord Hatton. At his death his son Christopher succeeded him in the title. He was a good son. He did his best to repair the family estate from his father's ravages and provide comfortable incomes for his mother

his brother Charles, and his sisters. He spent a great part of his time in Guernsey; his father, at the Restoration, had been made governor of the island, and the office was continued to the son. The letters of Scroggs contained in the Hatton correspondence are all addressed to this, the second Lord Hatton, whom we find Serjeant Scroggs assisting to evade, in rather a shady way, legal complications that had no doubt come to him from his father, and with whom the Serjeant had a common bond in a mutual love of good wine. But whether Scroggs and the Hatton family first became intimate through the selfish old lord, who liked low company, or the pious and truly noble son, as Roger North describes the second Lord Hatton, there is no evidence to determine. The first Lord Hatton, though a man well on in years at the Restoration, may have enjoyed the society of such high court rakes as Ker and Guy, Lord Vaughan and Sir Charles Sedley, of whom, North tells us, Scroggs was a boon companion. But, even supposing such to have been the beginning of Scroggs's acquaintance with the Hattons, the worthy son certainly did not drop his father's friend when he succeeded to the title. He and Scroggs corresponded on most friendly terms; he took a lively interest in the Serjeant's prospects of promotion to the Bench, and his brother Charles, the "incomparable" of Roger North's *Lives*, married a widowed daughter of Scroggs. If Scroggs was a voluptuary and a hard drinker, a man of a headstrong and unstable temperament, he could evidently make himself acceptable to men of decent life. If to posterity the name of Scroggs calls up nothing but the image of a "base and bloody-minded villain," he was not so considered by certain respectable contemporaries. Gravely as Scroggs must in the sequel be condemned, that condemnation, to be truthful and effective, must be shorn of the tawdry melodrama with which Whig bias has loaded this period of our history.

To his exploits as a Cavalier officer must in all probability be ascribed Scroggs's marriage, which took place about 1650 or 1651, with a lady of the old Berkshire family of Fettyplace. Her name was Anne, and she was a daughter of Edmund Fettyplace, of Denchworth, in Berkshire. She was in all likelihood a near relation to Charles Fettyplace, of Childrey, in the same county, who was made a baronet at the Restoration as a reward for services rendered and wounds suffered on the King's side in the Civil War. As far as we know, the marriage was a happy one.[1] From the occasional glimpses of the family we get in Charles Hatton's letters, Scroggs seems to have been on good terms with his female relations, though he had no very high opinion of woman's intelligence. Even his love of wine was shared, though in a more moderate degree, by the ladies of his household. Mrs. Scroggs bore her husband a son and three daughters. Lord Campbell describes Scroggs in his *Lives of the Chief Justices* as "a solitary, selfish *bachelor*."

Scroggs was called to the Bar in the June of 1653. Twenty-three years later he was raised to the Bench. His career as an advocate is as flat and uninteresting as his career as a judge is fraught with incident and excitement. During the Commonwealth his name appears once in the Reports, which shows that he did not, like some of the more ardent Royalist lawyers, such as Bridgeman, Morton, or Keeling, refuse to plead before Cromwell's judges. According to Wood, the young barrister applied himself with zeal to the study of municipal law, and no doubt, in the comparative quiet of Cromwell's régime, he had few temptations to wean him from the paths of study. It was probably during these years of early application that Scroggs compiled those materials for a work on the practice of Courts-Leet and Courts-Baron, which were

[1] According to Roger North the future Lady Scroggs was "a very matronly, good woman."

published after his death. But he had little in his temperament of those qualities which go to the making of a great case lawyer. He would never have been a serious rival to such learned lovers of the law as old Serjeant Maynard, who found his lightest relaxation in reading the Reports; or of Vaughan who, when he was Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, exclaimed openly on the Bench at the ignorance of the puisnes sitting by his side; or of Francis North and William Jones, who were laying the foundations of a success that after the Restoration made the one Solicitor-General at thirty-four and a Chief Justice at thirty-eight, the other the great legal bulwark of the country party. Nor did Scroggs follow the example of his contemporary, Francis Pemberton, who, after spending his early years at the Bar in a riotous debauchery that landed him in gaol, at the Restoration put behind him resolutely his ignoble past, and developed into a profound and much-respected lawyer. If Scroggs studied zealously before the Restoration, the coming of the King and his disorderly followers must have considerably curtailed those hours that Scroggs had hitherto devoted to the Reports and records of the Courts-Leet and Baron. Had it not been for his energy, his eloquence, his undoubted quickness and readiness of mind, and his bold and pushing address, hard living must have rapidly defeated such efforts as Mr. Scroggs had hitherto made to become a competent lawyer.

It would, however, be unjust to imagine that the carelessness of Scroggs's private life after the Restoration prevented him from achieving legitimate distinction in his profession. When he was made a Serjeant in 1669 and a Judge in 1676, he was receiving honours to which his position as an advocate fully entitled him. Not only was his eloquence such as to make him a worthy rival of the silver-tongued Finch, but he is found associated with many of the leading lawyers of his day in such famous

causes as that of *Skinner* v. *The East India Company* (1666), and the equally important case of *Barnardiston* v. *Soame* (1674), in which he appeared for the defendant with Sir Francis North, then Attorney-General. He was leading counsel for Sir William Penn, the Vice-Admiral, and father of the famous Quaker, who was impeached by the House of Commons in 1668. With William Jones and Francis Winnington, both eminent lawyers, he drew up Sir William's answer to the Commons' Articles, an answer that was satisfactory enough to lead to the abandonment of the prosecution. In 1667 we find Samuel Pepys listening in the House of Lords to the trial of the Duke of Buckingham's claim to the barony of De Ros. The counsel for the Earl of Rutland who opposed the duke's claim, William Montagu, the Queen's Attorney-General, and Sir Peter Ball, are, says Pepys, "good men," but Heneage Finch, the Solicitor-General, and Sir William Scroggs, who appeared for the duke, the diarist declares to be "excellent men." Unfortunately, we have no surviving specimen of Scroggs's forensic oratory, and it is only by the bare mention of his name as appearing in these notable cases that we can arrive at the conclusion that Scroggs's practice at the Bar was not confined, as a biographer avers, to "causes likely to be won by a loud voice and an unscrupulous appeal to the prejudices of the jury." Whatever the irregularities of his private life, Scroggs must have been well able to devote, when necessary, no small amount of attention to his business as a lawyer, and to concentrate his mind on legal questions of the highest order.

But Scroggs's undoubted attainments as an advocate and his strong Cavalier principles, would have done little for his legal advancement so long as Lord Clarendon continued Chancellor. Whatever his faults and weaknesses, Clarendon, in point of scruple and integrity, stands in a very different category from the reckless and unscrupulous political

leaders of the later part of the reign, to whom the personal character of their instruments or associates was utterly indifferent, provided they were serviceable. In his judicial appointments Clarendon certainly filled the Bench with men who were strict partisans, sharing to the full his own loyal principles, men like Bridgeman, who had refused to plead in the Protector's courts; or Malet and Kelyng, who had suffered imprisonment during the Commonwealth; or the hanging judge of his day, Sir William Morton, who at the outbreak of the Civil War had cast off his robe and fought valiantly in the field for the royal cause. But he never selected as judges men, even of his own party, who were likely in their private lives to reflect discredit on the administration of the law; and in the cases of Sir Matthew Hale, Edward Atkyns, and Thomas Tyrrell, he retained as judges sound lawyers who had sat in the Protector's courts. Clarendon's judges were most of them sturdy and severe loyalists; but one and all men whose respectability was, as far as we can tell, unquestioned. They had all belonged to that party among the late King's followers of which Clarendon was himself the most striking example, the party of sober, decent Royalists, who resented the excesses of the Rupert and Goring Cavalier. Scroggs no doubt belonged to the latter, as did a number of brilliant men. Restrained during the ministry of Clarendon, at his fall these free livers found place and power open to them. A series of unscrupulous statesmen, unexampled in our history—Buckingham, Danby, Shaftesbury, and Sunderland—succeeded each other almost without intermission in the conduct of public affairs. To these men the private character of a judge was of small account, provided his principles, if he had any, were theirs. Herein lies the difference between the judicial appointments of the earlier and later halves of the reign. Foster, Hyde, and Kelyng, whom Clarendon successively appointed Chief Justices of the King's Bench, were all staunch upholders of the royal

supremacy, and haters of sectaries and republicans. When such men appeared before them they treated them with a harshness and at times a brutality that was only a degree less shocking to modern ideas than that displayed by Scroggs to Papists, or Jeffreys to Whigs and Dissenters. Clarendon's Chief Justices were dull and prejudiced lawyers. But they were eminently decorous men, who, like the Chancellor, led decent lives and hated rebellion. Their successors, equally prejudiced against Popery and faction, were, on the other hand, nimble and quick-witted, enjoying life in the excessive fashion of the time, only too well fitted by temperament to fall in with the loose and demoralising habits that were fostered and encouraged at the court of Charles II. as soon as it was freed from the unsympathetic presence of the faithful Clarendon.

Scroggs had been knighted soon after the Restoration, presumably as a reward for his services in the Civil War. In 1669, after the fall of Clarendon, he was made a Serjeant, and further promoted to be one of the King's Serjeants in the same year. A lucrative practice as a stuff gownsman, and, perhaps, an inheritance from his father, must have been the means that enabled him to purchase, in 1667, Weald Hall and the accompanying manor of South Weald in Essex. The estate belonged to Sir Anthony Browne, a descendant of a learned Roman Catholic Chief Justice in the reign of Queen Mary, whose integrity was so much respected that, in spite of his adherence to his religion, he continued to sit as a judge under Elizabeth. This learned judge had purchased Weald Hall and bequeathed it to his descendants. But the financial embarrassments of the present owner obliged him to sell his property, and he found a ready purchaser in Sir William Scroggs, who was desirous of making his home in Essex. In buying the property Sir William was obliged to take over certain liabilities of Sir Anthony, which were to cause him some trouble in the future. Browne, who was perhaps one of

those high court rakes whom Roger North declares to have been the constant associates of Scroggs, had made himself liable for a debt as a security for the Earl of Carbery. This Lord Carbery, himself a man of excellent parts, but doubtful integrity, was the father of Lord Vaughan, one of the most notorious and flagrant rakes of the day, an ill-favoured man, "lewd even beyond the lewdness of Sir Charles Sedley." The exact nature of or parties to these transactions cannot be determined at this distance of time. It is sufficient to say that Scroggs, as a result of the negotiation, found himself saddled with an importunate lady litigant of the name of Smithsby, who, thirteen years later, when Sir William Scroggs was one of the most unpopular men in England, took advantage of the occasion to hale the depressed Chief Justice before the House of Lords.

But it is from the correspondence of the second Lord Hatton that we obtain our most intimate acquaintance with the private concerns of Serjeant Scroggs. After the death of the old Lord Hatton, Scroggs seems to have maintained very friendly relations with his sons. He writes to the second Lord Hatton in a strain of easy familiarity, whilst his brother, the incomparable Charles, was a constant visitor at Weald Hall, from which he eventually led to the altar a widowed daughter of his host. Serjeant Scroggs seems to have rendered to Lord Hatton those services that might be expected from a friend in the legal profession. He drew up his will for him, advised him in the management of his property, and in certain awkward law suits went so far as to recommend to him illegal courses when all legal manœuvres had failed. It is curious to find one of the King's Serjeants advising his friend to escape a legal process by the barefaced corruption of an Under-Sheriff.

The first letter of Scroggs to Hatton, preserved in the latter's correspondence, is dated February, 1671, and is written from the Serjeant's chambers in Gray's Inn. Both

Hatton and Scroggs were apparently involved in some troublesome suit which the Serjeant had undertaken to square. After warning Hatton against an outlawry impending at the suit of one "Halfside or Halfefair or some such man," Scroggs goes on: "I moved against my judgment in hope to prevail, but, however, moved without effect. The consequence is not much to your inconvenience, for what could not be done by justice, I advised your attorney to prevent honestly by corrupting the Under-Sheriff not to return the writ." There is a pleasant humour in Scroggs's idea of *honestly* defeating the due course of law by a bribe to its officer.

The dubious service that the Serjeant describes himself in this letter as having rendered to Hatton, he gives as an excuse for again reminding his friend of a promise as yet unfulfilled. This promise relates to the one thing in all the world that would seem to have been of paramount importance to Sir William—wine! and that wine, claret! Good sound claret, hogsheads of it! if only Scroggs is well supplied with these, he can stand anything; all the ills of life, even tiresome female relatives who intrude on his privacy; all these are mitigated and assuaged if only his cellar is well stocked with hogsheads of such claret as Lord Hatton can send him, if he will, from Guernsey. In a hand that seems at times to bear traces of the rapid exhaustion of his cellars, Scroggs writes to Hatton, and with incoherent jocularity conjures him to be faithful to his charge of replenishing his exhausted bins. In the October of 1671 the Serjeant writes that, bad correspondent as he is, the dwindled hogshead forces him to write and ask for more. He adds that he and a friend and his ladies are at the very moment drinking his lordship's health; and in conclusion takes the opportunity to congratulate Hatton on the fact that the ladies are not sending him any letters with his, for they would only try to write well, "and then they write sillily, knowing not what they write."

The next year we have another earnest appeal for wine from the Serjeant. After politely hinting that he finds Hatton's sisters, who are staying at Weald Hall, rather dull—"their smoothness of kindness is like a dead calm, not a wrinkle to be seen, but carrying one no whither"—and expressing a wish that they would take more after their brother, he urges a fresh supply of claret: "And now you talk of wine, well remembered! the last hogshead's abroach, and without a sudden supply there is no living for me at Weald Hall. The women drink in fear already, and you know all their passions are violent. 'Tis not a small matter will satisfy any one's desire, and here are a great many to be satisfied . . . let as much of it be claret, and as *strong* as you please, and more than ever you imagined." In September, 1673, he upbraids Hatton for having failed to send a promised supply: "I know now," he writes, "the pirates and the dangers of seas must be your excuse; but why wine could not as safely come as cider I understand not, unless there be articles for apples but not for grapes, or that the vigour of one would make it safe, but that cowardice of wine would turn it into vinegar. My lord, pray know that I am (though not the best performer) yet the greatest exacter of promises, that will never be answered by reason, but the thing itself; and think that reasonable to be made into a law that whatsoever is promised ought to be performed, whether it can or no." He adds a postscript in which he makes feeling allusion to his pecuniary difficulties that were in all probability increasing to an alarming extent. "If hogsheads were as cheap as warrants," he writes, "I had received them." In the last letter of Scroggs contained in the collection, written presumably in the same year, he gives Hatton a moving account of a present of wine sent to Charles Hatton, which had turned sour in the course of the journey: "We broke open the coffin at his house, wherein we found only the furniture of a coffin, corruption." Scroggs goes so far in this letter as

to apologise for the considerable space devoted in his letters to claret. "You must not take it ill," he writes, "if I write of nothing but wine, for there is nothing I want more, nor of which I can better write, or more willingly—with the difference only that wine wrote for has not half that elegancy as wine thanked for." After inviting Hatton to spend Christmas at Weald Hall, he concludes with a rebuke of women in general, and Hatton's sisters in particular, which seems to have been partially provoked by their wish to join him in his potations: "Having vented my passion of love to wine, my next good subject is railing against women. They haunt my chamber oftener than a pauper, and with much greater trouble, for they (the paupers) only do not give, but these plunder what others give. I want your company to redress that. Prithee, my dear Lord, make haste. . . . I am all love and all yours."

In an age of hard drinking, when few members of the House of Commons returned to their seats after the dinner hour in a state of perfect sobriety, it would be unwise to attach too much significance to the half-jocular outpourings of one friend to another on the subject of claret; nor does Serjeant Scroggs's inordinate love of the bottle seem to have made any difference to his intimacy with Lord Hatton, a very respectable person, as far as we know, nor with the incomparable Charles. At the same time, wine and warrants must be held answerable for the strictures passed on the private life and character of Scroggs by writers so divergent in their prejudices as North and Burnet. "His debaucheries were egregious, and his life loose," writes North. "A man more valued," writes Bishop Burnet, "for a good readiness in speaking well than either for learning in his profession, or for any moral virtue. His life had been indecently scandalous, and his fortunes were very low." Though Burnet's description is plainly over-coloured—Scroggs's learning was by no means

inconsiderable, nor were his fortunes very low—his reputation was undoubtedly a poor one among men who, like North and Burnet, did not regard with indulgence the lax morality of their day. And in 1675 a public scandal was to proclaim Serjeant Scroggs to the world as one whose private life was careless and disorderly in a fashion singularly ill-befitting a man of middle age, raised to the honourable dignity of the coif.

It was in the spring of 1675 that the Courts at Westminster were edified by the spectacle of a Serjeant-at-Law being arrested for debt in the very Hall itself. Serjeant Scroggs had been at length overtaken by one of those warrants, the multitude of which he had so feelingly deplored to Lord Hatton. The arrest had been made at the suit of one Deakins, and joined with Scroggs as defendant was a Mr. Gilby, probably his son-in-law, Charles Gilby, a barrister, who had married the Serjeant's daughter Elizabeth. Scroggs was much outraged by Deakins' fearless proceeding, for he brought an action against him in the King's Bench for illegal arrest, on the ground that, as a Serjeant-at-Law, Deakins should have sued him in the Court of Common Pleas, to which court the serjeants were supposed to be attached. The point raised by Scroggs aroused considerable interest. When the case first came before the judges of the King's Bench, it was adjourned in order that Sir Matthew Hale, then Lord Chief Justice, might be present at the argument of so important a question of privilege. His presence was not likely to advance the interests of Serjeant Scroggs. The worthy and venerable judge must have viewed with considerable disgust Brother Scroggs's escapade, and been little inclined to stretch a point in favour of his contention. When the hearing came on, the Chief Justice disposed very summarily of the Serjeant's plea, in spite of the learned arguments of Mr. Holt, the future Chief Justice under William III., who on this occasion appeared as counsel for

Scroggs. Though, he said, Serjeants had a monopoly of practice in the Common Pleas, yet they often practised in his own Court of King's Bench; and consequently if he assigned one of them as counsel to plead before him, and the serjeant refused, he should not hesitate, he declared, to commit him to prison. Arguing from this standpoint, Hale made short work of the Serjeant's case.

Legal advancement was uncertain and full of surprises in the reign of Charles II. Hale retired from the Bench in the year following this decision; he survived just long enough to see the disorderly Serjeant sitting as a Judge in the Court of Common Pleas, and, less than two years from his death, Sir William Scroggs was one of his successors as Lord Chief Justice of England.

Scroggs's embarrassed finances made it high time that his influential friends should do something to retrieve his fortunes. The opportunity came with the advent to power of the Lord Treasurer, the Earl of Danby. The King, furnished with supplies from France, was able to prorogue Parliament from the November of 1675 to the February of 1677. During these fifteen months Danby had to dispose of four judicial vacancies. As a politician Danby was a firm believer in a friendly Bench. To a partisan of personal as opposed to popular government, the existing judges left a good deal to be desired. Some of them, Hale, Atkyns, Ellis, and Wyndham, might be reckoned frankly unsympathetic to the desire of Charles and Danby to dispense as far as possible with parliamentary control. Others, like Twisden, Wilde, and Thurland, were too infirm in body or weak in character to be of much service to the minister. He wanted fast friends to King and Church, extreme loyalists, firm Protestants, ardent Cavaliers, to administer the King's justice. Faction was an ever-present danger, and the judges had in a recent instance shown themselves slack to deal with it. In the

August of 1675 there had been a riot among the London weavers. It had arisen from the introduction into England of "looms with engines." The weaver who possessed these looms could do in one day the work of ten men working looms "without engines." This so enraged those weavers who were unable to acquire the new looms, that they attacked the houses of their more fortunate brethren and broke up their machinery. Some hundred families in and about London were ruined, and a few lives lost, partly owing to the slackness of the Lord Mayor in suppressing the riots. The Government having reproved the Lord Mayor before the Privy Council, issued a commission of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of the rioters; but when the case came on in September, to the disgust of the Crown most of the judges failed to appear, and the court was adjourned for a fortnight. Judges such as these were not for Danby. In the April of 1676 he had an opportunity of doing something to strengthen his hold on the Bench. Age and infirmity compelled the worthy Hale to retire from the Chief Justiceship of the King's Bench, and about the same time death removed the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Sir Edward Turnour, a man of considerably less worth than his learned brother. To Hale's place succeeded Sir Richard Rainsford, a puisne judge of the King's Bench; a respectable man in every way, and of loyal principles; and the vacancy occasioned by his promotion fell to Sir Thomas Jones, a strong judge, who was sturdily faithful to the Crown until James II. over-strained his loyalty by asking him to subscribe to his views on the dispensing power. William Montagu, the Queen's Attorney-General, succeeded Turnour as Lord Chief Baron, and his loyalty, as that of Jones, only quailed before the extravagant demands of King James II. Scroggs had so far failed to profit by these judicial changes, but as early as May Charles Hatton writes to his brother to tell him that Danby has shown himself extraordinarily kind to the

Serjeant, and had promised in a very few days to provide for him. This was to be done by getting rid of Sir William Ellis, a Judge of the Common Pleas: he and his brother Atkyns in the same court were fearless opponents of prerogative and upholders of popular rights. Danby pressed the King to dispense with their services. Charles was reluctant, and it was only after considerable pressure that he consented to the removal of Ellis. This was effected in June, but it was not till October that Serjeant Scroggs received the vacant place. The King may well have felt some doubt about his fitness to sit as judge in a court on which he had brought discredit by his escapades with bailiffs. But Danby was not so particular. Scroggs and Jeffreys were both indebted to the Treasurer for advancement, which otherwise their somewhat erratic courses might have impeded. The persuasion of the Lord Treasurer and other friends of Scroggs at court, prevailed over the King's hesitation. But the minister did not escape popular censure for his judicial appointments. Shortly after Scroggs had taken his seat on the Bench, a libel was posted on the gates of the palaces of Westminster and Whitehall, stating that two or three judgeships would shortly be put up for sale, and that any young lawyer desirous of filling one should apply to the Lord Treasurer, who would fix a day for receiving offers.

Whatever may have been the misgivings in the mind of the King over Scroggs's appointment, they were dissipated, and the character of the judge retrieved in the royal eye by the speech he delivered on the day he was sworn in by the Lord Chancellor in the Court of Common Pleas. This oration made little short of a sensation in court circles. Never had a judge proclaimed with such eloquence and vigour his conception of the duties of the King's justices. Lord Northampton, who heard it, hurried off to the King and told him that it taught the people more loyalty than

any sermon that had been printed. At his request the King ordered it to be published in every market town in England, and when in November Mr. Edmund Verney wanted to buy a copy at the bookseller's, he found they were all sold out.

It was without doubt a flaring speech. The judge declared that he thought it right and "like English honesty and plainness" to "something unveil himself" as to what would be his attitude as a judge towards any matters of government that might come before him. He would no more wrong the people's liberties, he said, than he would sacrifice up his own son; but then, he added, he would no more derogate from the King's prerogative than he would betray his father. And then he launched out into a graphic description of the boldness of faction and the fearful timidity of those who should support King and Government, "when men are forward and venturous enough in what thwarts the Government, but in supporting it were cautious, nice, and humorous, and so filled with prudentials till they are as wise as fear can make them."

In the light of Scroggs's subsequent career, of the intemperate zeal, the improper fervour with which he threw himself into the prosecution of Oates's victims, his conception of the proper attitude of a judge is curious. "Be quick to hear and slow to speak . . . the most towering understanding that is attended with an impetuous haste either out of glory of speaking or a too great fulness of oneself," is nothing to the patient attention of a man of modest parts; he would be no seeker of "the applause of the multitude, that contingent judge of good and bad that rather attends the vain than the virtuous." These were precepts that a man of Scroggs's excitable temperament found it quite impossible to recollect when he found himself plunged into the vortex of a great national convulsion.

For two years Scroggs led a quiet and uneventful

existence on the easy cushion of the Common Pleas, "a place very agreeable," so he declared, "to his unactive spirit." In the meantime Danby had been advancing in power and influence until, at the beginning of 1678, he may be said to have reached the zenith of his ministerial career. Scroggs, as Jeffreys also, had no doubt been serving Danby in a private capacity, for we find him, probably in 1678, writing to the Treasurer on the subject of a pamphlet written by some gentleman against "the little lord," presumably Lord Shaftesbury, which previous to its publication Danby had submitted to the judge for his criticism. At the Whitsuntide of 1678 Scroggs was asked to submit to the King a proposed draft of his speech at the ensuing opening of Parliament. Danby and Sir William Temple had been asked to submit similiar drafts. Scroggs's speech, though much admired, was rejected finally in favour of Temple's, as containing some expressions against popery distasteful to "one person," doubtless the Duke of York. This ill-timed reflection on the Romish religion goes some way to prove the sincerity of the mistaken violence with which Scroggs assailed the Papists and their religion in the earlier of the Plot trials.

If Scroggs was mortified by the rejection of his speech, he was consoled most effectually by receiving from Danby a warning that he was in danger of judicial promotion. The Court of King's Bench, according to the Treasurer, stood in sore need of regeneration. And he was right. With the exception of Jones, the recently appointed judge, the judges of the King's Bench were feeble in the extreme. Chief Justice Rainsford was now seventy-three years of age, and "commonly slept on the bench." Mr. Justice Twisden, aged seventy-six, had ceased to attend the court, and was only awaiting a proper adjustment of his pension to retire; while his brother Wilde, who was well nigh seventy, had been in failing health for a year.

The Treasurer had undoubtedly good and just cause for removing Rainsford from the Chief Justiceship in the Trinity term of 1678; but, with the exception of the Hatton family, and perhaps a few other faithful friends, the public must have received with some little astonishment the news of the appointment on May 31st, of Mr. Justice Scroggs of the Common Pleas as his successor. This was "rousing" the energy of the King's Bench with a vengeance. Danby was now master of the court; whatever the attempts of faction, in the King's Bench, Charles and Danby could count on an ardent and energetic Chief Justice, determined fanatically to uphold the daring claims of prerogative.

From Scroggs's speech to the Lord Chancellor on taking his seat as head of the court, it would seem that the Bar had, under the somnolent régime of Rainsford, got somewhat out of hand. Though, said the new Chief Justice, his lion's courage in supporting the throne would not be exerted to worry the lambs—meaning thereby the young trembling gentlemen of the Bar, who in their anxiety "to eye the judge's face, forget their business,"—yet he would suffer none of those indecent or clamorous practices on the part of hardier practitioners, which might please a client, but did him no good. The very heart and life of the legal profession, he continued, was loyalty; the favour extended to the Robe shall be measured by their loyalty; "he shall be first heard who moves best for the King"; the court shall prove prerogative the best friend of liberty. And he concludes: "He that with honesty and industry does his best has discharged his conscience, if not his duty; and although he may not merit a mighty fame, yet will have satisfaction enough within, when he considers that it is not necessary to be a great man, but a good one."

How far this emotional rhetorician sustained as Chief Justice this modest ideal of the necessities of his new

situation, is written in the history of the Popish Plot. How far temperament, character, the strange and unexampled circumstances of the time, the faulty state of legal procedure, were responsible for the unfortunate figure he cut in his extravagant conduct of many of the Plot trials, cannot be discussed in this brief sketch.[1] But Roger North, in all probability, has hit off Scroggs most happily in calling him a "ranter," a man to whom popular excitement at once communicates itself, so that he forgets the restraints of the judicial seat, and converts his court into a public meeting; a man wanting in the balance and common sense of the true judicial mind. It is not so much what Scroggs did in the Plot trials that has exposed him to just censure—few judges of his day would have acted differently—it is the ranting, transpontine way in which he conducted himself that has rendered him odious. By looking into his early life we get some clue to that general intemperance, which in more senses than one was his most obvious failing.

In any case history can hardly subscribe to the terms of an elegy written in 1683, on the death of the fallen Chief Justice, in which Scroggs is described as the "pattern of humility," the "gown's chief boast to after times," "impervious to the golden shower," the whole concluding with the following doggerel epitaph:

> Beneath this marble, how can it be said,
> Immortal Scroggs, a man so just, is laid?
> 'Tis but his dust, reader, suppose no more;
> The rest's in heaven, 'tis there laid up in store,
> Till with loud sounds the trumpet wakes the dead,
> And rising dust is with fresh beauty clad;
> Then shall he live above the world's renown,
> And wear for ever virtue's shining crown.

[1] For the later history of Scroggs, I would refer the reader to Mr. John Pollock's *History of the Popish Plot*; and, if I may be permitted the reference, to my own *Life of Judge Jeffreys*.

The principal authorities made use of in this sketch are:

Cussan's *History of Hertfordshire.*
Morant's *History of Essex.*
Speech of Sir William Scroggs . . . on his admission to the place of one of His Majesty's Justices of the Court of Common Pleas, 1676.
Lord Chief Justice Scroggs's Speech to the Lord Chancellor, 1678.
Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses.*
Hatton Correspondence. Add. MSS. British Museum.
Elegy in memory of the Right Worshipful Sir William Scroggs, late Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, departed this life October 25th, 1683.
Colendissimo Viro, Gulielmo Scroggs, Militi, et De Banco Regis, Capitali Justiciario, Prolusio Laudativa, May, 1680.
Levinz Reports.
Historical Manuscripts Commission—*Verney Papers.*
Matthew Carter, *True and Exact Narrative of the Siege of Colchester.*

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

WESTFIELD UNIV LONDON COLLEGE